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MALATCHI OF COWETA

Creek Diplomacy on the Southeastern Frontier, 1715-1756

by

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1989

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study required numerous hours of my time and energy, but it was not completed without support and assistance from others. I would like to thank the following people for their help in producing this thesis.

Special thanks must go to Dr. Peter Wood and Dr. John TePaske; as my advisors on this project, they directed me to the proper sources and critically examined every argument within this thesis (not to mention letting me borrow significant portions of their personal libraries). Dr. Thomas Robisheaux provided me with continual motivation throughout the academic year, both as leader of the Honors seminar and on an individual basis, which allowed me to maintain the energy to finish this work in good spirits. I cannot go without thanking each and every one of the members of the 1988-89 Senior Honors seminar. Their insightful comments and criticisms helped make this thesis both easy to read and understandable. They gave me an excellent forum to present my first drafts and work out the problems prior to the final deadline. I only hope all of their theses bring them as much satisfaction as mine has.

There were many other people who assisted in the production to this thesis; in research, profreading, production, and general moral

support. I cannot describe each person's contribution in detail, but I would like to mention them and offer them my deepest appreciation for their help: my parents, Bob and Kathy Armstrong, Jane Fairburn, Kimberley Rankin, Marie DeFrances, Kathy Heinrich, Jennifer Gorman, and the Circulation Department of Perkin's Library.

INTRODUCTION

"It is astonishing, though a fact, as well as a sharp reproof to the white people, if they will allow themselves liberty to reflect and form a just estimate, and I must own elevates these people (the Indians) to the first rank amongst mankind, that they have been able to resist the complicated host of vices, that have for ages over-run the nations of the old world, and so contaminated their morals; yet more so, since such vast armies of these evil spirits have invaded this continent (the Americas), and closely invested them on all sides. Astonishing indeed! When we behold the ill, immoral conduct of too many white people, who reside amongst them; not withstanding which, it seems natural, eligible, and even easy , for these simple, illiterate people, to put in practice those beautiful lectures delivered to us by the ancient sages and philosophers, and recorded for our instruction."[1]

Throughout American history, the Indians rarely receive the respect given here by American naturalist William Bartram in the 1770s.

The Colonial Southeast is the area of the United States which present day Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina occupy. In the eighteenth century, Great Britain, France, and Spain each had a vested interest in this area of North America, and they saw the Indians as a key resource to aid in their claiming of these lands. Indians in the Southeast had the opportunity to deal with all three of the major colonial powers during this period. Most Indian groups fell under the spell of the European traders and agents, and took sides in the colonial struggle. One Southeastern Indian nation, however, did not enter the European power struggle during the eighteenth century. The leaders of this Indian Nation chose instead to play off the three colonial powers in an effort

to make itself stronger and less vulnerable to attack by both Indian and white man. Their stratagem was successful, and this thesis will chronicle the origins and successes of the masterful Indian diplomats of the Creek Confederacy.

This thesis uses the Coweta mico, Malatchi, as its focus because he provides a vivid and little known example of Creek diplomacy in action. Through him, the dynamics of Creek diplomacy are readily apparent, despite the fact that his town of Coweta was only a small part of the vast Creek Confederacy.

In order to bring out the characteristics which make Creek diplomacy unique, a detailed description of Creek culture is necessary. Chapter One will introduce the reader to Creek culture. These aspects of Creek culture are crucial to understanding the environment and methods from which Creek diplomacy arose. The next chapter will then describe the history of its development of Creek diplomacy in the early eighteenth century. The chapter also traces the early success of Creek diplomacy from 1715 to 1739. In third chapter, the attention shifts to Malatchi, a master practitioner of Creek diplomacy. The chapter follows Creek diplomacy from 1739 to 1756, including Malatchi's reign over Coweta (1747-56). The conclusion will tie together the material and describe the failure of Creek diplomacy following the French and Indian War, when its effectiveness declined in the wake of the British victory.

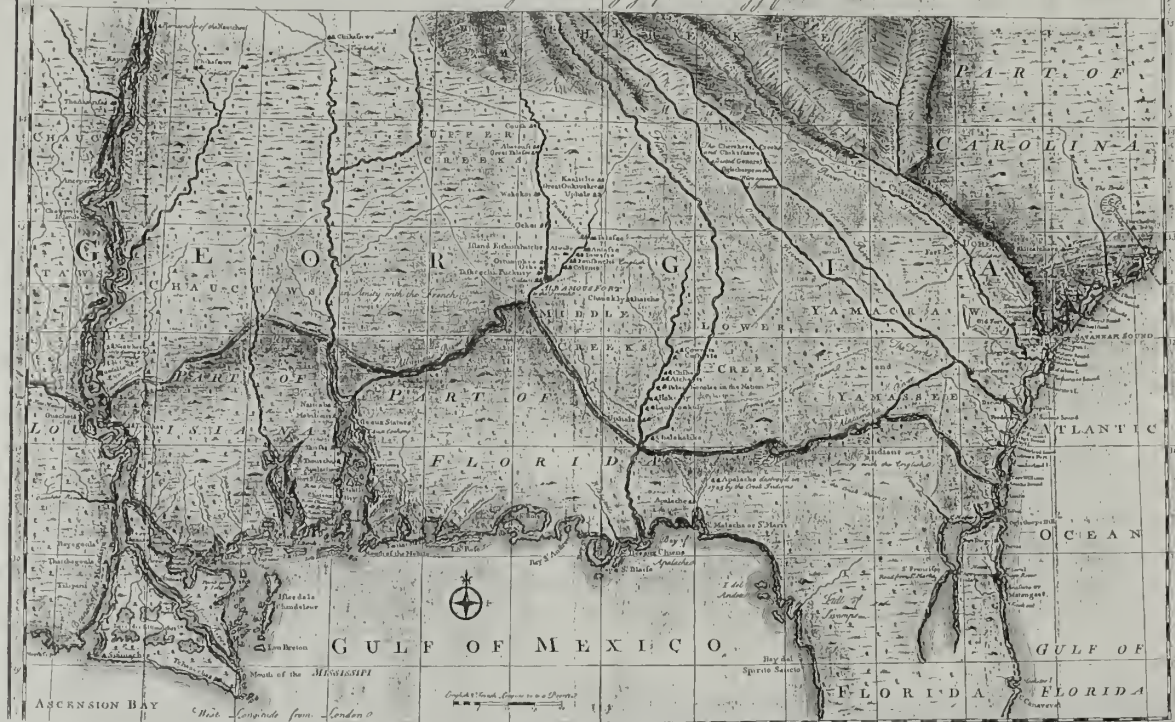
Despite the fact the only sources for this study are European, the story of Creek diplomacy will be told from an Indian point of view. Instead of focusing on one of the European powers, the focus here will

be on the Creeks, tracing their movements through the European journals and records. This study should dispel the notion of a passive Indian response to the Europeans in the Americas and be a prime example of native Americans successfully surviving a period of intensive European contact and manipulation.

A New Map of GEORGIA, with Part of CAROLINA, FLORIDA and LOUISIANA.

Drawn from Original Draughts, assisted by the most approved Maps and Charts.

Collected by Eman: Bowen Geographer to his Majesty.



CHAPTER 1

MALATCHI'S WORLD

Although Creek diplomacy is the focus of this study, it would be incomplete without an examination of the Creeks themselves. Creek diplomacy, as the story unfolds in the subsequent chapters, attributes its methods, premises, and success to the nature of the Creek Confederacy. Through both their long standing institutions and the European misunderstanding of those institutions, the Creeks managed to hold the Europeans at bay for fifty years. To learn how Malatchi and his contemporaries were able to accomplish this, one must first understand Malatchi's world.

The descriptions of Malatchi's world all come from the pens of European travellers, settlers, and government officials. These documents span the entire eighteenth century, so the following primary accounts of Creek life will be a synthesis of observations spanning the entire eighteenth century, not just the years of Malatchi's major activity. Colonial travellers did not visit all the different Creek towns or even have knowledge of the diversity of the Confederacy. The Creek Confederacy was a vast collection of towns and tribes. This raises questions about the validity of the observations. Are they representative of the peoples of the entire Confederacy, or are the

descriptions merely local reflections of tribal life? To eliminate this problem, careful consideration has been taken to provide a clear window into Creek life as it was in the mid-eighteenth century. The following is Malatchi's world.

Creek Country and Its People

The lands which lie in present-day Southern and Central Georgia and Alabama were eighteenth century Creek country, one of the more bountiful and beautiful areas in the New World. The English trader James Adair who worked in the region during the mid-1700's gave an inviting description of Creek country:[1]

> "Their land is generally hilly, but mountainous... most of the towns are very commodiously and pleasantly situated, on large beautiful creeks, or rivers, where the lands are fertile, the water is clear and well tasted, and the air extremely pure."[2]

Most large Creek towns were on the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers in Georgia and on the Alabama, Coosa, and Tallaposa Rivers in Alabama. Malatchi's town of Coweta lay on the Chattahoochee River in the vicinity of present-day Phenix City, Alabama. The geography of the Southeast was the major reason the Creeks were able to become such active players in the colonial world. By being located in the center of Southeast, the Europeans considered Creek friendship crucial in any plans of dominating the Southern colonial lands.

The European observers often praised the Creeks. William Bartram, noted naturalist and traveler said of them:[3]

> "They are honest, liberal and hospitable to strangers; considerate, loving and affectionate to their wives and relations; fond

of their children; industrious, frugal, temperate, and perservering; charitable and forebearing . . . as moral men they certainly stand in no need of European civilization."[4]

These descriptions may be difficult to believe, but Bartram had little to gain by creating a fictitious account of these native peoples.

The Creeks differentiated themselves from the rest of the major Southeastern Indian tribes. Along with the Cherokees, Choctaws, Seminoles, and Chickasaws, the Creeks made up the bulk of Southeast Indian peoples; yet it is the Creeks who are most often noted in the 18th century literature as being different from the other four groups. Bartram notes:

"The Muscogulges (Creeks) are more volatile, sprightly, and talkative than their Northern neighbours, the Cherokees; and, though far more distant from the white settlements than any nation East of the Mississippi of Ohio, appear evidently to have made greater advances toward refinements of true civilization, which cannot, in the least degree, be attributed to the good examples of the white people."[5]

Accounts of Creek culture and lifestyle go back to the initial European contact in the sixteenth century. In March, 1540, the DeSoto expedition passed through Creek country.[6] The Gentleman of Elvas, who chronicled DeSoto's journeys, had a surprisingly detailed and lengthy account of the native populations.[7]

"The houses of this town were different from those behind (in Florida), which were covered with dry grass; thenceforward they were roofed with cane, after the fashion of tile. They are kept very clean: some have their sides so made of clay as to look like tapia. Throughout the cold country every Indian has a winter house, plastered inside and out, with a very small door, which is closed at dark, and a fire being made within, it remained heated like an oven, so that clothing is not needed during the night-time. He has likewise a house for summer, and near it a kitchen, where fire is made and bread baked. Maize is kept in barbacoa, which is a house with wooden sides, like a room, raised aloft on four posts, and has a floor of cane. The difference between the houses of the masters, or principal men, and those of the common people is, besides being larger than the others,

they have deep balconies on the front side, with cane seats, like benches; and about there are many barbacoas, in which they bring together the tribute their people give them of maize, skins of deer, and blankets of the country."[8]

After this initial description by the Gentleman of Elvas, the Creeks continue to be a fairly well documented Indian group; yet despite the large amount of attention they received, they remained a mystery to their observers. A systematic and careful review of the documents on the Creeks should give a better illustration of who these people were and what they did.

The Europeans were struck initially by actual ethnological differences between themselves and the Creeks. More often than not, travelers and adventurers were impressed by the physical characteristics of the Creek peoples, for they were so unlike any group the Europeans had contacted. Louis LeClerc Milfort, a Frenchman who spent several years living with Creeks and rose to the position of War Chief, had this to say about Creeks:[9]

"The Creeks are of moderate height and are of a reddish copper color; they are strong and robust and easily support fatigue. They are very great walkers and sometimes march three to four hundred leagues on their hunting expeditions."[10]

Bernard Romans, naturalist and traveler in the 1770's, also commented on the Creek peoples:[11]

"They are all remarkably well shaped, they live in a level country full of rivers, are expert swimmers and in general a very hardy race;... their women are handsome and many of them cleanly, they are very hospitable and never fail of making a stranger heartily welcome, offering him the pipe as soon as he arrives, while the good women are employed to prepare a dish of venison and homany."[12]

William Bartram was most struck by the size difference in the Creeks,

he said the men were of "gigantic stature... many of them larger than six feet" while the women were "remarkably short of stature... seldom above five feet tall."[13]

Establishing what the Creeks looked like is a relatively easy task, but answering the question "Who were the Creeks?" is a much more difficult task. First, there is the name problem. Some of the more modern historical works on the Creeks have used the term Muscogulge to name the Indians of the Creek Confederacy. They have cited, correctly, that the word Creek is a European construct, and Muscogulge is probably the word the Creeks used to describe themselves. In fact, in Bartram's travel accounts, he acknowledges that the Creeks would rather be known as Muscogulges than Creeks. This information sways many authors to use the Muscogulge name instead of the more Europeanized "Creek" term. Malatchi, in his dealings with the Europeans, would not have used the term "Creek" to describe himself or his townspeople. Yet, this Muscogulge term encompasses the wrong group of peoples for this study, which is mainly concerned with the Indians of the Creek Confederacy. This included not all of the Muscogulges and had several other non-Muscogulge Indian groups associated with it. Therefore, the term Creek will be used throughout despite its European, rather than Indian, origins.[14]

Many studies have delved into the origins of the term "Creek". Verner Crane's explanation, which seems to be the most accepted, is that the term originated from the fact that the English first dealt with the Creeks at Ochise Creek, and began to call these Indians "Creeks" for short.[15] A similar theory believes the English traders

used the term "Creeks" because of the multitude of streams and rivers in Creek country. However, the term became at times a homogenous term for all the Indians of the Southeast; the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws were all wrongly called Creeks at one time or another by unknowing Europeans.

An important distinction of the Southeast Indians was that they were town and village dwellers with well developed agriculture, as opposed to nomadic hunters. A Georgia Ranger traveling with James Oglethorpe to Coweta to meet with Malatchi and his predecessors in 1739 described the typical Creek home in Coweta:[16] "Their houses or hutts are built with stakes and plaistered with clay mixed with moss which makes them very warm and tite."[17] Like Coweta, these towns were usually located on a river or stream and arranged around a central square, which was the hub of town activity. Each town was a separate and autonomous political and ceremonial unit. The town served as the political focus for each of its residents.[18] One modern Indian historian felt Creek town life had great benefits:

> "Ultimately the strength of the Confederacy rested upon the vigorous and satisfying communal life of the towns. Every town was a center of free, abundant living--of toils shared in careless fellowship, of feasting, dance and frolic, of sin and retribution and moral aspiration--all directed by the men of the council."[19]

Political Structure

The peoples making up the Creek Confederacy were a diverse group of individual, autonomous tribes linked together by a common bond. This bond had partial basis in that many had a common descent; the other, outside groups became part of the Confederacy by becoming

incorporated following Creek or European destruction of the larger part of the tribe. The major groups incorporated during Malatchi's time were the Natchez and the Shawnee, both of whom had been virtually eliminated by the Europeans in the eighteenth century. The end result was an incredibly varied group of Indians usually dedicated to helping each other in times of need. Romans describes this ethnic diversity:

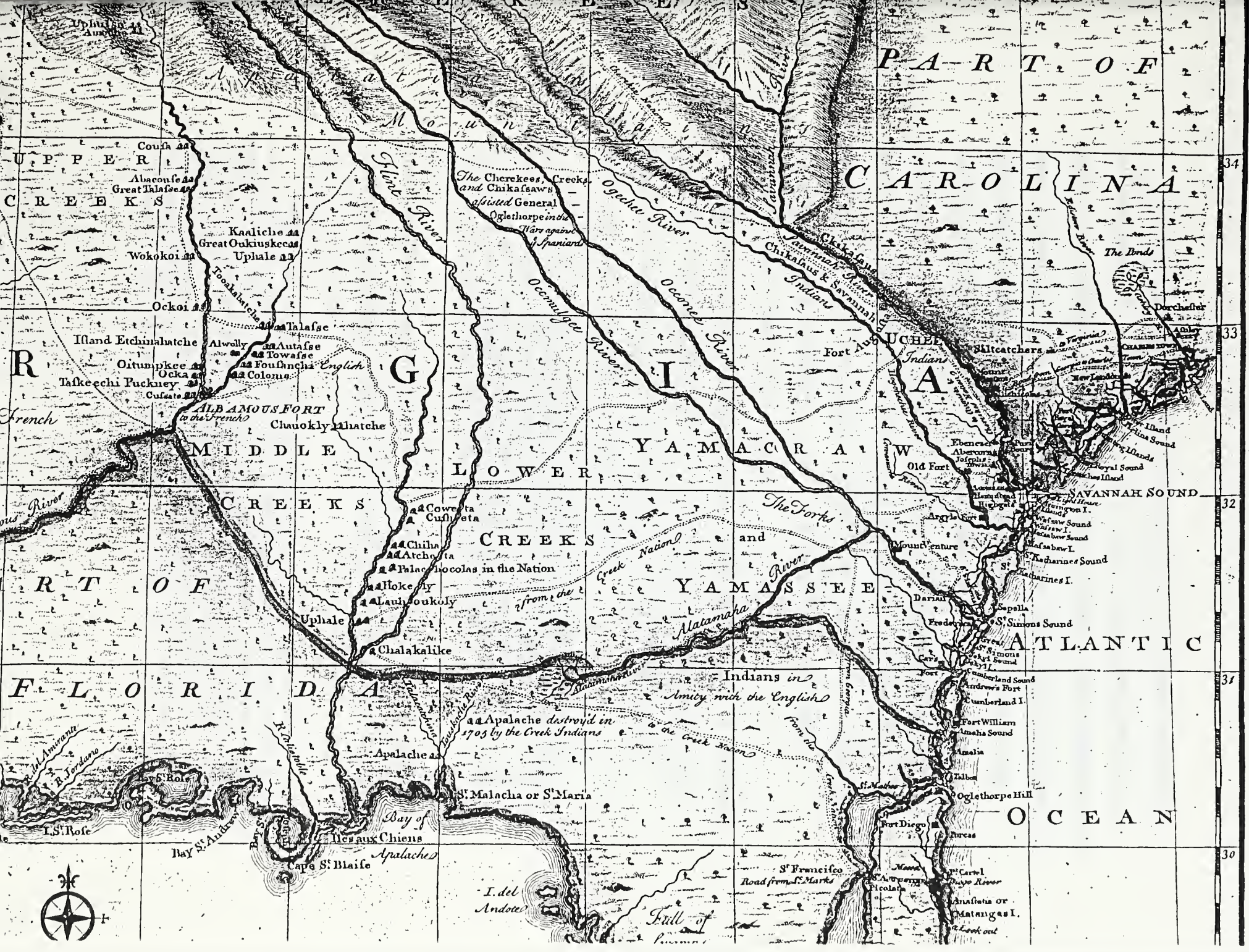
> "A mixture of the remains of the Cawittas, Talepoosas, Coosas, Apalachias, Conshacs or Coosades, Oakmulgis, Oconis, Okchoys, Alibamons, Natchez, Weetumkus, Pakanas, Taensus, Chacsihoomas, Abekas and some other tribes whose names I do not recollect... they call themselves Muscokees and are at present known to us by the general name of Creeks."[20]

This basically describes a loose confederacy of tribes, with the Muscogulges being the dominant ethnic stock throughout the Confederacy. How similar these tribes were could be questioned, but evidence shows that all Confederacy tribes were similar. Jean Bernard Bossu, a French traveller, commented:[21] ". . . the Alabamas, Outachepas, Tonikas, Cowetas, Abihkas, Talepoosas, Conshacs, and Pankanas, all of whom have very much the same customs and live along the rivers."[22]

The concept of a loose confederacy is difficult to grasp. Evidence shows that most Indians in the confederacy did not even speak Muskogee, but chose to use their own tribal derivative of the Muskhogean linguistic family; or, in some cases, something totally different. Not only were interpreters needed to communicate with the Africans and Europeans which travelled through Creek country, but interpreters were often required for communication between groups within the Confederacy. This was often the case when Malatchi and other Creek leaders attempted to gather representatives from all over Creek country for meetings with

the Europeans. The important point to remember is that the Creeks were not a unified band held together by a strong common bond. In Malatchi's town of Coweta, the townspeople's loyalty was primarily to Coweta; if the interests of the confederacy also served the interests of Coweta, Coweta tribesmen would participate in Confederacy actions. However, they were not bound to participate if their interest was not served. The Creek Confederacy was made up of individualistic tribes of Indians who probably felt a greater attachment to their individual tribe than to the Confederacy as a whole.

Within the Creeks, another subdivision was made to distinguish two groups of Creeks. One group, the Upper Creeks, were those Indians who inhabited the region around the Alabama, Coosa, and Tallaposa Rivers in modern-day Alabama. The other group was the Lower Creeks, who occupied the region around the Flint and Chattahoochee River in modern Southern Georgia and Alabama. Even though the Creek Confederacy was relatively unified for its diverse membership, the Upper and Lower Creeks often times carried on different relations with traders and other Indian groups. The main towns of the Upper Creeks were Coosa and Tuckabatchee. Coosa was instrumental in the initial Creek contact with the Spaniards while Tuckabatchee rose to power later in the eighteenth century. In Lower Creek country, the two major towns were Coweta and Kashita (Cussita). Malatchi's Coweta was the major war town of the Lower Creeks, and usually, the principal town of the entire Confederacy, most notably during the mid-1700's. The Upper and Lower division of the Confederacy explains some of the prevalent trends in Creek history and policy making during Malatchi's period.[23]


P A R T O F
C A R O L I N A
U P P E R
C R E E K S
Cousa
Abaconse
Great Talasse
Kaaliche
Great Oukiuskees
Wokokoi
Uphale
Ockoi
Talasse
Autasse
Towasse
Foushanchi
Colomo
Island Etchinahatche
Alwolly
Oitumpkee
Ocka
Taskeechi Puckney
Cusate
ALBAMOUS FORT
to the French
Chaukly Hahatche
M I D D L E
C R E E K S
Cowe ta
Cusheeta
Chilla
Atchoota
Palachocolas in the Nation
Hokelly
Laulhoukoly
Uphale
Chalakalike
Apalache destroyd in
1703 by the Creek Indians
Apalache
St Malacha or St Maria
Bay of
Ilets aux Chiens
Apalache
Cape St Blaise
Bay St Andrew
I. St Rose
St Rose
R. St Amants
R. Jordano
F L O R I D A
The Cherekees, Creeks
and Chikasaws
assisted General
Oglethorpe in the
Wars against
Spaniard
Flint River
Ogeche River
Ocmulgee River
Occonee River
Savannah River
Chikasaw & Savannah
Indians
Fort Augusta
U C H E E
Indians
Silkcatchers
Fort
Ebenezer
Abercorn
Joseph's Town
Old Fort
The Forks
Creek Nation
and
Y A M A S S E E
River
from the
Matamaha
Indians in
Amity with the English
from the Creek Nation
Darien
Frederica
Argyle Fort
Mount Venture
Sapella
St Simons Sound
St Simons
Cumberland Sound
Cumberland I.
Fort William
Amelia Sound
Amelia
Talbot
Oglethorpe Hill
Fort Diego
Turcas
St Francisco
Road from St Marks
I. del
Andoter
Full of
Matanigas I.
Look out
Dorchester
The Bonds
Ashley R.
CHARLES TOWN
New Londonderry
Hilton Head
Port Royal Island
Port Royal Sound
Beaufort
Ebenezer
Abercorn
Joseph's Town
Old Fort
Hamilton
Highgate
Argyle Island
Hutchinson I.
Skidaway I.
Wilmington I.
Wilmington Island
Skidaway Island
Wilmington Sound
Skidaway Sound
Mount Venture
Isle of Hope
Thunderbolt
Bonaventure
Isle of Hope
Whitemarsh I.
Wilmington
Savannah
Ogeechee
Ogeechee River
Savannah River
Little River
Great Ogeechee River
Hutchinson Island
Ebenezer Creek
Savannah Sound
Tybee Island
Tybee Road
Tybee River
Tybee
Wassaw I.
Wassaw Sound
St Katharines Sound
St Katharines I.
Sapelo
St Simons Sound
St Simons
Cumberland Sound
Cumberland I.
Fort William
Amelia Sound
Amelia
Talbot
Oglethorpe Hill
Fort Diego
Turcas
St Francisco
Road from St Marks
Matanigas I.
Look out
Ocean
34
33
32
31
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One important distinction between towns in the Creek Confederacy was the label of "red" town or "white" town, which predetermined its role in the politics of the Confederacy as a whole. Red towns were war towns: councils for war, diplomacy, and foreign relations occurred in these towns. Notable red towns included Coweta in the Lower Creek country and Okfuskee in Upper Creek lands. Red towns were focal points in relations with the Europeans and other Indian groups, especially the two Lower towns. White towns were peace towns. Kasihta was the major white town of the Lower Creeks. Councils for peace talks, adoptions of conquered tribes, councils on laws, and settlements of domestic problems took place in these towns.

The Creeks impressed the Europeans with their level of political specialization and even more so by their methods of governing. One anonymous Frenchman was so impressed with the Creek methods of government that he wrote this short passage:

> "The Indians are savage only in name. They have as much discernment and shrewdness as can be expected of a people without education. They talk very little but they are to the point. They have a regular government among themselves after their own fashion, no injustice, no quarrels, a very exact subordination and great respect for their leaders, whom they obey spiritedly."[24]

Creek government was very different from what the Europeans called effective government. John Wesley's comments on the Creeks illustrates this difference:[25]

> "They [the Creeks] have many towns, a plain, well-water'd country, and fifteen hundred fighting men. They have often three or four meeko's [village leaders] in a town; but without so much as a shadow of authority, they only give advice, which everyone is at their liberty to take or leave. But age and reputation for valour and wisdom have give Chicali [Chigelly, the noted leader of Coweta in the 1730's], a meeko of Coweta town, a more than ordinary influence over the nation; though not even the show of regal power."[26]

European observers could not get used to the non-authoritarian methods by which the Creeks ran their Confederacy, nor could they understand that the Creeks' deep respect for age and achievements was enough of an influence to drive the political machine.

Contemporary historians have commented that this form of government maintained unity in the Creek political system. Since the government operated only by unanimous consent or consensus, there were no renegade minorities to form factions within the Creek community, which led to better political and social harmony. In addition, the nature of the system allowed for ambitious characters to rise in Creek politics and build successful public action movements.[27] James Oglethorpe, founder of the Georgia colony, described the dynamics of Creek politics:[28]

> ". . . for there is no coercive power in any of their nations; their kings can do no more than to persuade. All the power they have is no more than to call their old men and captains together, and to propound to them the measures they think proper; and after they have done speaking, all the others have the liberty to give their opinions also; and they reason together with great temper and modesty, till they have brought each other into some unanimous resolution. Then they call in the young men, and recommend to them the putting in execution the resolution."[29]

As an example, uninformed Europeans came into Coweta in 1750 and expected Malatchi to be the omnipotent ruler of the town. They were surprised, as Oglethorpe was, to find that Malatchi had no power exercise his will, only the power to advise. Malatchi appeared to be in total control because his advice was usually taken by the Coweta townspeople.

The leader of the town government was the mico (micco or meeko).

Creek micos rose to power by both their family's status and their achievements in battle and town management. Malatchi had the opportunity to become mico of Coweta by virtue of his family's status; they had led Coweta throughout the eighteenth century. Malatchi's work in Creek diplomacy in the service of his family allowed him to become mico of Coweta. Bartram observed:

"The mico or king, though elective, yet his advancement to that supreme dignity must be understood in a very different light from the elective monarches of the Old World, where the progress to the magistracy is generally effected by schism and the influence of friends gained by more violent efforts."[30]

Yet for all the honor and dignity, the European observers found that the mico was not an authoritative figure. Thomas Nairne, early English trader and diplomat, commented:[31] "The government of this people, such as it is, seems to be the shadow of an aristocracy, nothing can be farther from absolute monarchy."[32] While the Europeans were shocked by this passive rule of the mico, Bartram appreciated this form of rule:

"But here behold the majesty of the Muscogulge mico! He does not either publicly or privately beg of the people to place him in a situation of command and rule them: no one will tell you when or how he became their king; but he is universally acknowledged to be the greatest member among them, and he is loved, esteemed and reverenced, although he associates, eats, drinks, and dances with them in common as another man."[33]

The duties of the mico were important, despite his seeming powerlessness he possessed within the town structure. Bartram listed the mico's duties:

"The most active part the mico takes is in the civil government of the town or tribe: here he has the power and prerogative of calling a council, to deliberate on peace and war, or all public concerns, as inquiring into and deciding upon complaints and differences; but he has not the least shadow of exclusive executive power."[34]

The pay and tribute gained from the position of mico seemed insufficient to Europeans. Thomas Nairne commented:

> "All the governing which the town allows the chief is first howing his field of corn, giving him the first dear and bare that is taken at every generall hunt, fat or lean he must take it as it comes, for these honest men don't pretend that their subjects should contribute too much to maintain a needless grandure."[35]

Some micos of the major towns, Coweta, Cussita, Coosa, and Tuckabatchee, became the supreme mico, a great honor. Malatchi held this title in the 1750s. He represented the tribe as a whole in relations with foreign powers and attempted to look out for the entire Confederacy's interests. But, as it was when he was serving as mico of Coweta, no Creek was bound by his word and was free to make agreements with the Europeans as they saw fit (which they did quite often).

The duties of the Creek mico were many, but his power was little, so there were many other officials under him in a unique and specific framework. These town officials were split into two categories: the white officials and the red officials. White officials concerned themselves with the town business while the red officials carried on war interests. The white officials, whose duties included running the town's agricultural system, administration, and performing the town's important ceremonies, were under the direct control of the mico. The henehalgi (or heneha) carried out these activities. In addition to carrying out the administrative duties, some historians have suggested that their presence on the council served to remind the others of the essentially peaceful purpose of Creek life.[36] The mico had as advisors the older men of the tribe who had formerly served the town in important council positions. These men were simply referred to as

"beloved men". The power and influence of the beloved men appeared great to the Europeans, for as Romans observed, "the Creeks revere old age to excess."[37]

The warrior group was equally important in the affairs of the town. The leader of the red officials was the war chief, or tustennuggee thlocco. Bartram describes him as:

> "The next man in order of dignity and power is the great war chief: he represents and exercises the dignity of the mico, in his absence, in council; his voice is of the greatest weight in military affairs; his power and authority are entirely independent of the mico, though when a mico goes on an expedition, he (the mico) heads the army, and is there the war chief."[38]

Under him was a hierarchy of warriors, each level being based on merit in battle. These minor red officials acted as enforcement officers during times of peace and represented the town in war when it was declared.

The division of the government into red and white factions did not give the Creeks strong town or Confederacy government. Yet this decentralization of power seems to be deliberate: the Creeks did not want to threaten individual freedom by having one omnipotent ruler. Conflicts existed between the two factions at times; white officials often tried to maintain peace for the town while the red warriors continued hostilities. These conflicts did not manifest themselves as violence and governmental breakdown, but they did make for some spirited lacrosse games between the two sets of officials. To further ameliorate the situation, only one group was in control of a town at a given time. For example, when Coweta was at peace, the mico and the white officials were the dominant group, but in times of war, the red

officials took over. The transfer of white to red power and vice versa was smooth, as historian Michael Green notes:

"The civil council made all decisions, including that of declaring war, but when that step was taken, the big warrior issued the declaration and took over the mobilization. Until peace was reestablished military rule prevailed, and the war council functioned as the effective government. If the dual system of the Creeks worked properly, peacetime brought a return to civil government."[39]

The major forum for town government was the daily council. The council was usually held on the town square every morning and was attended by the men of the village. Attendance varied throughout the year because of hunting expeditions and war parties, but the council continued regardless of poor turnout. Almost every important issue dealing with day to day town life was discussed at the council. Matters which most frequently came up were war and peace decisions, planting and hunting plans, social disputes, town maintenance, law and order reviews, and important ceremonies. Bartram feels "the supreme, sovereign or executive power resides in a council of elderly chiefs, warriors, and others, respectable for wisdom, valour, and virtue."[40] The daily council was important for day to day business, but the most important matters were often discussed in private at the mico's residence. Thus, while the council was important, it was a necessary ritual for daily business, while the dire issues facing the town were examined in private before being brought to council. The daily council allowed all men in the town to feel a part of the decision-making process, making them feel like an integral part of the community.

The town square and council house were the center of every Creek town. The European observers were especially impressed with the

Tuckabatchee town squares and meeting halls. Tuckabatchee was a major Upper Creek town to the Northwest of Coweta. David Taitt, an English official in the employment of Indian commissioner John Stuart described them in these terms:[41]

> "The square is formed by four houses about forty feet in length and ten wide. Open in front and divided into three different cabins each. The seats are made of canes split and worked together raised about three feet off the ground; and half the width of the house, the back half being raised above the other half about one foot. [The town house is] a square building about thirty feet in diameter rounded a little at the corners; the walls are about four feet high, from these walls the roof rises about twelve feet, terminating in a point at top. The door is the only opening in this house for there is no windows nor funnel for the smoke... There is a small entry about ten feet long at the out side of the door and turned a little round the side of the house to keep out the cold and prevent the wind blowing the fire about the house."[42]

Upon observing the Tuckabatchee town house, Bartram feels that it is "capable of accommodating many hundred people."[43] All councils were held either in the square or the house, and the seating at these councils was specifically set. The white officials sat together with the mico, the red officials sat together with the warrior chief, and the beloved men had their own seating area. Within each of these groups, a seating hierarchy existed based upon rank and the accomplishments within the group. The young men were the fourth group present. These were the up-and-coming boys who came to the council to learn about the government of the town and prepare themselves for future leadership.

Two other important traditions of the council meeting, and Creek meetings in general, are worth noting. The Black Drink ceremony preceded all councils or political meetings. It consisted of drinking a brew made from cassine roots and immediately vomiting after drinking.

This ceremony seemed rather strange to European observers at first, but the reasoning behind the ceremony was felt to be sound. Louis Milfort observed this about the Black Drink;

"This ceremony, which at first seemed ludicrous to say the least, is nevertheless grounded on the following very wise principle, which would not always be amiss in the councils of civilized nations... but the purpose of this revolting display is to assure the chief of the assembly that each and every member of it has an empty stomach, a resultantly clear head, and that all questions will be debated in cold blood and not under the influence of liquor."[44]

Another striking characteristic of Creek political functions was the expert oratory. Both the mico and the warrior chief employed personal orators at council meetings, and professional oratory was respected in Creek towns. James Oglethorpe, who visited several Creek political gatherings, found the orators "both in action and expression, to be thorough masters of true eloquence. In speaking to their young men, they generally address the passions. In speaking to the old men, they apply to reason only."[45]

Society and Culture

A common institution the Creeks shared with Southeastern Indian groups was the social clan. Each individual belonged to a totemic clan: such as the bear, deer, wind, beaver, or some other name. Common throughout the Southeast, clans members considered all members family, regardless of the tribe or town from whence they came. In 1708 Thomas Nairne observed:

"The usual names of their fameiles are the turkey, tygare, dear, bear, eagle... now if a savage of the tygare fameily becomes a thousand miles off, and finds any of the same name they own and treat him as

their kinsman even though the two nations have wars together."[46]

Clan membership determined an individual's social relationships and was the focal point of that individual's town life. Sometimes, clan membership also determined a person's position in society. There were white and red clans as well as a clan which usually supplied the town with micos and other high ranking officials. The most important point, however, is that clan loyalty usually far outweighed any loyalty to town or Confederacy and was an important factor in the decentralization of the Confederacy.

Clans had very particular rules for social conduct and membership. They were matrilineal, as Thomas Nairne described: "The savages reckon all their fameiles from the mother's side, and have not the least regard who is their father thus if a women be of the tygar of turky fameily, her childeren are all so too."[47] The first and foremost rule of the clans was that no intermarriage may go on between clan members, even if they were of different towns or tribes. Nairne commented: "it is accounted the greatest crime in the world, for a man to marry or lye with a woman of the same name (clan) tho never so remote or (they) come from a another country."[48] To the individual Creek, the clan structure affected his life to a much greater extent than town or Confederacy politics. In Coweta, clan business would have come before the recommendations of Malatchi and the council. The clan was a Creek's family and his focal point to measure society; therefore his loyalty to it ran deep.

Although the clans were matrilineal, Creek society was male-dominated. For example, Bartram described the division of labor

in Creek towns:

"The chief business of the women is planting corn and other things and minding the business of the house, the men hunt and kill deer, turkeys, geese, buffaloes, tygers, bears, panthers, wolves, and several other beasts whose skins they sell to the traders for powder, ball and what other necessities they want."[49]

Philip von Reck, a German traveller in Georgia, commented on the husband/wife relationship:[50]

". . . they [the males] are haughty, especially to their wives, who are not much better than slaves: they must wait upon their husbands in the house, do all the household work, and they may not eat with their husband. On the hunt the wife must haul all the baggage and household goods, yet meanwhile the husband carries only his gun, mirror, shot pouch, and sometimes a bottle of brandy. Yet they [the women] do all this so willingly that it seems rather their kind intention than a burden on them."[51]

Creek women, furthermore, were often treated as objects even before marriage. Bossu observed:

"When an unmarried brave passes through a village, he hires a girl for a night of two, as he pleases, and her parents find nothing wrong with this. They are not at all worried about their daughter and explain that her body is hers to do with as she wishes."[52]

Men handled the task of governing the town, but there is a good deal of evidence exists that women also had a hand in government. On several occasions, women became the primary force in relations with the Europeans. During Malatchi's years of activity, Mary Musgrove, a Creek women who had married an English trader, was his most important link to the Georgia colony. Through her he was able to deal with the Georgians and have a voice in the colonies affairs.

The Creek family was usually small, and those children in the family were treated with great care in their early childhood. In later years, the girls were gradually relegated to household and agricultural

chores while the boys were subjected to trying tests of endurance on their road to manhood. Bossu, upon observing these tests of manhood, commented:

"Their [male] children, who are raised with great severity, are forced to go swimming at dawn in the wintertime. Then they present themselves to the war chief, who tells them that they must never be afraid of the water and that if they are pursued by the enemy and captured, they may be burned alive at the stake. They must then prove that they are true men by not crying out. When the chief is finished speaking, he cuts scars on their thighs, chests, and backs to inure them to pain. He then whips them with leather straps. After this initiation, they take their place among the warriors."[53]

Creek life was not all work and no play. The Creeks had many recreational outlets, the most popular being ball games and social dances. The ball games ranged from the rough lacrosse game to the more sedate chunkey. Lacrosse was played by both men and women and consisted of passing a small ball around to team members with sticks and into net or goal. Chunkey was a game played by the older men and involved rolling large stones to a target area, like modern lawn bowling. Bartram observed the Creeks playing lacrosse:

"The ball play is esteemed the most noble and manly exercise. This game is exhibited in an extensive level plain, usually contiguous to the town; the inhabitants of one town play against another, in consequence of a challenge, when the youth of both sexes are often engaged, and sometimes stake their whole substance"[54]

Social dancing was another outlet for Creeks, observed by Bernard Romans:

"Every afternoon a young savage warns the village to dance; as soon as it is dusky they make a fire of dry pitch pine, and round this they dance in a circle with many strange gestures, postures, and cries; the women sing regularly and some prettily to the musick of a kind of drum. I have heard them sing, and seen them dance to no more than the words 'Yahoodela, Yahoyhena' for above two hours."[55]

These sports and dances played an important a part in the Creek lifestyle, almost as important as daily council meetings.

Religion was not a focal point of Creek life. Aside form the Green Corn Celebration in the late summer, religion was conspicuously absent in Creek towns. Bartram notes:

"So far from idolatry are they, that they have no images amongst them, nor any religious rite or ceremony that I could perceive; but adore the Great Spirit, the giver and taker away of the breath of life, with the most profound and respectful homage, where the spirit exists... where they enjoy different degrees of tranquility or comfort, agreeably to their life spent here."[56]

The lack of religion and ritual surprised the Europeans, for most of them found them to be very Christian-like peoples (John Wesley being a notable exception). James Oglethorpe comments on the morality he observed in Creek life:

"as to the moral part of Christianity, they understand it and do assent to it, they abhor adultery, and do not approve of plurality of wives (Creeks did have polygamy, but it was not widely practiced, at least not where Oglethorpe was observing). Theft is a thing not known among the Creek Indians... murder they look on as a most abominable crime."[57]

These values and ideas were not exposed in daily or frequent ritual, but were an integral part of accepted Creek life.

The only ritual religious ceremony was the annual Green Corn Celebration held every year, in the first part of August, in almost all Southeastern Indian settlements. The general theme of the celebration was starting over or renewal. A new crop of corn was brought in beginning a new year. Clans gathered to hear their elders, who talked about virtues and plans the clan members should keep in mind for the upcoming year. The town council met to review the year and make plans

for the next. The celebration impressed the Europeans and they commented on it frequently in their accounts of the Creeks. Milfort said:

> "Every year, in August, each family comes together to celebrate the harvest festival, at which time they renew everything that has served them during the past year. The women break and smash to pieces all their household appliances and replace them with new, this is the day that they eat for the first time the new corn and that the priest or medicine man of the district kindles the new fire and administers the new war medicine to all the assisting men."[58]

Bartram adds:

> "They collect all their worn out cloaths and despicable things, sweep and cleanse their houses, squares, and the whole town, of their filth, which with all the remaining grain and other old provisions, they cast together into one common heap, and consume it with fire... a general amnesty is proclaimed, all malefactors may return to their town, and they are absolved form their crimes, which are now forgotten."[59]

This was indeed a pivotal and important event in the annual life of the Creeks, and one which brought the nation together. The Creek Confederacy was filled with very different peoples who often had differences with each other. The annual celebration served cleanse the nation of its differences among the various Creek factions and maintain a harmonious peace within the Confederacy. Malatchi was installed as mico at the 1747 Green Corn Celebration. The Green Corn Celebration served as "a religious experience which transcended the differences and emphasized the oneness of the Creek nation."[60]

That their most important religious event was related to corn points out an important feature of Creek life. The Creeks were primarily sedentary agriculturists instead of nomadic hunters. The most important crop was maize, with beans, squash, melons and sweet potatoes

supplementing the diet. The hunting in the region also provided well for the Creeks. There were abundant supplies of deer, bear, small game, fish, turkeys, and waterfowl for Creek hunters to bring back to the town. Romans was impressed by the plentiful supplies of the Creeks, commenting: "Their way of life is in general very abundant, they have much more venison, bear, turkies, and small game in their country than their neighbours have, and they raise an abundance of small cattle, hogs, turkeys, ducks..."[61] Surpluses of corn were kept in the public granary administered by the mico. These supplies were kept to feed those going on important missions, visitors to the town, and to feed the members of the council who did not have as much time to care for their own fields. In general, almost every Creek was able to provide for himself, and famine and seem to have not been a problem.

Creek Warfare

The Creeks needed food surpluses, to feed those men who went into battle. The Creeks were constantly at war. Most of the time the wars were only local town or clan skirmishes, but sometimes the Creeks as a nation were pitted against another large Indian nations, most often the Cherokees or the Choctaws. Louis Milfort, who became a war chief while living among the Creeks, has good personal insights on Creek warfare.

> "These people, though endowed with a martial spirit, live peaceably and do not harass their neighbors; but should an enemy force them to assemble and take up arms, they do not return home until they have fought and taken many scalps; these might be compared to the flags among European troops. When a Muskogee kills his enemy, he takes the entire scalp, a highly honored trophy on his return to the nation."[62]

These warlike actions stepped up when the Europeans arrived because of the highly intense power politics which the Europeans introduced. War chiefs were enticed to take their town's troops into battle for the rewards of European goods or protection. Scalping also increased with European intervention. Creeks took the scalps to prove to governors and Indian officers that the hostile action requested was indeed carried out. War was an inseparable part of every man's life, for in battle one could make a name for himself and rise in the town hierarchy.

The art of war was very important to the Creeks. The rituals and practices of war were almost as important as the reasons for fighting. Thomas Campbell, a British officer who passed through Creek country, observed that:[63]

"When at war they are generally in parties of twenty or thirty, sometimes fewer. They never ask any but their own family or clan to go with them and these they only acquaint they are going against such a nation and will remain at such a creek or hill where those who have a mind will find them, Their prisoners they often kill in a very cruel manner, and the wenches assist and are worse than the men."[64]

Milfort, the true expert on Creek warfare, shared the view of their discipline:

"When they go on the warpath, they observe a very rigorous discipline. The moment they draw near the enemy they march in single file, with the chief at the head and each man walking in the footsteps of the person in front of him. The last in line even sometimes covers up the footprints with grass. In this way they prevent the enemy from knowing how many of them there are. When they halt or pitch camp, they sit cross-legged in a circle, each with his gun beside him, leaving a passage only wide enough to admit a single person. The chief sits facing this entry to the circle, which no soldier may leave without his permission. When it comes time to sleep, he gives the signal, and from then on no one moves. They are also awakened by a signal.'[65] "They may neither eat nor drink without the permission of their chiefs. I have seen them refrain from drinking even when swimming across a river because circumstances had obliged the chief to prohibit it under

penalty of depriving them of their little war medicine, that is to say, their talisman."[66]

War medicine was a focal point for Creeks going into battle. Milfort describes two types:

"the big medicine fanaticizes the soldier, so to speak. When he has partaken of this, he thinks he is invulnerable... The little medicine serves to diminish, in his eyes the dangers. Full of confidence in his chieftain, he is easily persuaded that, if the little war medicine only is administered, it is because the circumstances do not warrant the big."[67] "The dispositions are ordinarily designated by the grand chief (war chief), who also posts the sentries charged to watch over the safety of the army. There is always a large number of scouts as a van and rear guard, so that it is extremely rare for an army to be taken by surprise. With the Europeans, on the contrary, the Indians wage a war of surprise, which is very dangerous for those who are not versed in it.'[68]

Besides their tremendous craftsmanship in war, the Creeks were also noted for their hospitality. Numerous observers lauded the Creeks for fine treatment of guests and general hospitality. Tobias Fitch, an Indian affairs agent in the 1730's, recounted:[69]

"I arrived July the Ninth and was received with a great many seremoneys; The king of the town took me by the hand and lead me to a house where were sitting all the head men of the several towns there about; and after passing some complements there was some fowls brought in and set before me; and before I was suffered to eat the King made the following speach: 'I am glad to see you here in my town but I am sory that I cannot entertain you with such as I am entertained when I go down your great town; but I hope you will except of such as I have and you are very welcom to it."[70]

Even the earliest Europeans contacts with the Creeks comment on their hospitality. Davila Padilla, seventeenth century Spanish historian in his account of the De Luna expedition which followed the initial penetration made by DeSoto by about twenty years, reported:[71]

"Those from Coza (Coosa) received the guests well, liberally and with kindness, and the Spaniards appreciated this, the more so as the actions of their predecessors (DeSoto) did not call for it (DeSoto's

party had terrorized the town and depleted it of its men and supplies)."[72]

Creek hospitality was not blind to the threats which the Europeans might and did pose. Milfort commented on Creek wariness to his presence in their midst:

"The army set out, and I quickly noticed the subordinate chiefs, under the pretext of friendship, had been charged to keep an eye on me. When we were at close quarters with the enemy, they did not let me out of their sight. When the chiefs convened the council of war to draw up the plans of operations, my being a European inspired them with a desire to learn my ideas in this respect."[73]

The Creeks believed they could keep a better eye on the Europeans by befriending them, for they knew that the Europeans presented both a help and a hindrance to the existence of their town and the Confederacy as a whole. Malatchi often entertained and allowed himself to be entertained by the Europeans to keep close contact with them. The success of his diplomatic efforts was dependent on his knowledge of the European colonies and his ability to understand their leaders.

Some aspects of their culture were unfavorable to the European eye. John Wesley, the noted English evangelist, was especially critical:[74]

"all the Creeks, having been most conversant with white men, are most infected with insatiable love of drunkedness, as well as other European vices. They are more exquisite dissemblers than the rest of their countrymen. They know not what friendship or gratitude means. They show no inclination to learn anything; but least of all, Christianity; being full as opinionated of their own parts and wisdom, as neither modern Chinese, or ancient Roman."[75]

A contemporary and friend of Wesley's, Benjamin Ingham, commented:[76]

"How I should mange God alone can direct me. The youth (a Creek boy he encountered near Savannah) is sadly corrupted and excessively addicted to drunkedness, which he has learn't of our Christian

heathen. Nay the whole Creek Nation is now generally given to this brutal sin, whereto they were utter strangers before Christians came among them. O! What work we have before us!"[77]

These men found the Creeks unreceptive to conversion to the Christian faith, and thus found them to be inferior people. European biases like these often stereotyped the Creeks and the Indians in general as immoral and savage, further clouding European understanding of the Indian and his ways.

The ferocity of the Creeks in battle their harsh treatment of prisoners further alienated them from their European counterparts. Bernard Romans commented:

"As hospitable as this nation is to friends, as irreconcilably inhuman are they to their enemies; there is hardly an instance of one miserable prisoner's ever having escaped their barbarity; the torments they put the wretched victims to, are too horrid to relate, and the account thereof can only serve to make human nature shudder."[78]

Although Romans may not have had the stomach to recount prisoner treatment, von Reck afforded a graphic description:

"The war captives are brought, bound, to a great square in the Indian town. The king, the war chief, and all the men and women of the town are assembled, the king makes a speech and sentences him to death. The captive is then struck with switches and sticks, studded with rosinous pine splinters, and bound to a post. A fire is made around him, just far enough away from him so that he roasts only gradually. The fire is built and kept up by the women, which is more painful to the captive than the roasting itself. The women now and then take a firebrand and hold it against his breast, the like of which [the resulting brand] is more or less customary among one or another nation, all of which they perform with smiles."[79]

These actions, a norm in Indian societies of the Southeast, obviously shocked and repulsed the European observers. It served as yet another confirmation of Indian "savagery," making the Creeks both a group to be feared and perhaps a people to be looked at as inferior.

The Creeks and the Europeans

The Europeans, especially the English, found the Creeks to be a very difficult group to deal with after they had been wronged. James Oglethorpe said:

"The passion of revenge, which they call honor, and drunkedness, which they learn from our traders, seem to be the two greatest obstacles to their being truly Christians... as for revenge, they say, as they have no executive power of justice amongst them, they are forced to kill a man who has injured them, in order to prevent others doing the like; but they do not think any injury, except adultery or murder deserves revenge."[80]

Von Reck further admonished:

"If an Indian is wronged by a European, he kills him or, which is all the same to him, another European. From this it may be seen how dangerous it is to offend an Indian and how soon through the bad behavior of a single person, an Indian war and the ruin of an entire colony can be brought about."[81]

For the above reason, the Europeans respected the Creeks. This respect allowed Malatchi and his predecessors to work with the colonial officials and effectively bargain. Other Indian nations were written off as "drunkards" or "weak", but the Creeks escaped these denotations. Their strength, character, and savagery created the opportunity for effective diplomacy.

European accounts of the Southeast allowed the Creeks to stand out like no other group or nation of Indians. The Creeks had something different about them, something which made the Europeans pay more attention to them than to their counterparts. James Adair commented on the Creek frame of mind:

"As the Muskohge judge only from what they see around them, they believe they are now more powerful than any nation that might be tempted to invade them." For, he adds, "they are certainly the most powerful Indian nation we are acquainted with on this continent."[82]

Bartram added:

"The national character of the Muscogulges, when considered in a political view, exhibits portraiture of a great or illustrious hero. A proud, haughty and arrogant race of men; they are brave and valiant in war, ambitious of conquest, restless perpetually exercising their arms, yet magnanimous and merciful to a vanquished enemy, when he submits and seeks their friendship and protection: always uniting the vanquished tribes in confederacy with them; when they immediately enjoy, unexceptionably, every right of free citizens, and are from that moment united in one common band of brotherhood."[83]

Why did the Creeks last so long in the face of European intervention, while other tribes and nations wilted under the strain of disease and annihilation of constant war? James Adair offered some of the reasons:

"All the other Indian nations we have any acquaintance with are visibly and fast declining, on account of their continual merciless wars, the immoderate use of spiritous liquors, and the infectious ravaging nature of the smallpox: but the Muskohge have few enemies, and the traders with them have taught them to prevent the last contagion from spreading among their towns, by cutting off all communication with those who are infected, until the danger is over. Besides, as the men rarely go to war till they have helped the women to plant a sufficient plenty of provisions, contrary to the usual method of warring savages, it is so great a help to propagation, that by this means also, and their artful policy of inviting decayed tribes to incorporate with them..."[84]

From these reasons, the Creeks made themselves the most numerous and powerful of the Southeastern tribes by the mid-1700's.

The most dynamic aspect of this power was the advanced state of diplomacy. It is by means of this diplomacy, perhaps more so than any other aspect of their culture, that the Creeks were able to survive in the world of European imperialism. Too often, tribes and nations

aligned themselves with one European colonizing nation, creating tensions among other tribes and Europeans. The Creeks were different. By not committing to one European power, they made themselves more open to the benefits of European trade and less susceptible to plots against their position in the Southeast. By being friend to all but ally to none, the Creeks successfully played off three of the most powerful nations in the world and became the most powerful Indian nation in the Southeast. James Adair expressed these views in his summary of Creek power in the Southeast:

> "The Muskoghe having three rival Christian powers their near neighbors... the old men, being long informed by the opposite parties, of the different views and intrigues of those European powers who paid them annual tribute under the vague appellation of presents, were becoming surprisingly crafty in every turn of low politics. They held it as an invariable maxim, that their security and welfare required a perpetual friendly intercourse with us (the British) and the French (the Spanish had been removed by the time of Adair's report), as our political state of war with each other would always secure their liberties."[85]

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF CREEK DIPLOMACY

Before the eighteenth century, Creek Indian towns behaved just as most Southeastern Indians did. The predominant pattern among the Southeastern Indians was to align themselves with one European group and remain hostile to the competing Europeans on the frontier. In the Creek's case, most towns dealt exclusively with the English, while some of the southernmost Lower Creek towns made alliances solely with the Spanish. By following this course of European relations, the Creeks were destined to depend on one colonial group for their supplies and protection. This relationship could ultimately lead to the Creeks becoming pawns in the struggle for control of the Southeast.

In creating the powerful, crafty Creek Nation which James Adair and William Bartram spoke of so highly, a change came in the early 1700s. That change arose in Coweta, the most influential Creek Indian town in the late colonial period. The mico of Coweta in this critical era, Brims, or "Emperor" Brims as the English called him, was able to gather the entire Creek peoples together in a revolt against the English monopoly of trade, strengthen the Creek Confederacy, and lay down the policy which Malatchi and his peers would use to make themselves the dominant Southeastern Indian group.

The traditions and customs of the Creeks makes Brims's success questionable, for the Creeks were not a nation easily led by one man. He was, however, quite successful in spreading the merits of his ideas throughout the Confederacy and implementing his designs on the Europeans. The Europeans held him in such high esteem that most diplomatic efforts centered on winning Brims's support in hopes of swaying Creeks to their side. Trading and land requests were usually directed toward him, and when those requests were refused, they attempted to undermine his power by inciting splits in Confederacy. Brims' notoriety as an Indian leader and diplomat often leads to a misperception of what was really occurring in Creek towns during the 1700s. One twentieth century account went as far to say:

> "The white men call him 'Emperor of the Creeks.' Though his own people knew no such title, it is fairly descriptive of his power and authority among them; for he was Chief of the 'tall Coweta', the red-war town whose prowess, before history begins, had won for it the hegemony of the Muscogees and the other tribes by force or by negotiation they have brought into their Confederacy."[1]

Coweta was not the "capital" of the Confederacy nor was Brims its "emperor", as Harris suggested. But the activities in Coweta did have a great bearing on the Creeks, and Brims was usually leading the action.

Because of his activity and influence, Brims is one of the few colonial period Indians to be described by European observers. An anonymous French observer said:

> "He is a man of good appearance and good character. He has a number of slaves who are busy night and day cooking food for those going and coming to visit him. He seldom goes on foot, always [riding on] well harnessed horses, and followed by many of his village. He is absolute in his nation. He has a quantity of cattle and kills them sometimes to feast his friends. No one has been able to make him take

sides with one of the three European nations who know him, he alleging that he wishes to see everyone, to be neutral, and not to espouse any of the quarrels which the French, English, and Spaniards have with one another."[2]

Brims' policy surprised Europeans, who had become accustomed to the Indians aligning with only one power. Brims, however, did not formulate his diplomatic methods without seeing the other side of European relations and their effects on the Creeks. Brims drew on the past to look to the future.

Early European Contact and Alliances

Creek history prior to the development of Creek diplomacy is crucial to understanding problems which Brims was trying to avoid in the early 1700s. The first contact with Europeans came when the Spaniard Hernando DeSoto and his party of treasure seekers moved through Creek country in 1540. His party terrorized villages of natives with guns and horses while in search of food and other supplies. Several Creek towns received DeSoto as a friend, including Coweta, but when his men began stealing the town's corn supply, the Indians turned on him. DeSoto took Indian captives as porters and then proceeded to Cherokee country to the North in search of gold. Later, DeSoto returned south and traveled through Upper Creek lands, where he was invited to stay at Coosa, the largest Upper Creek town of the time. Again, DeSoto and his men wore out their welcome and had to flee the area, but not before taking supplies and men to use as porters.[3] The DeSoto legacy made the Spanish very unpopular with the Creeks,

especially in the Upper towns. Jean-Bernard Bossu talked with an Upper Creek mico in the 1750s, and found that the Indians still remembered DeSoto after 200 years: "He told me that tradition had it that the first fire warriors [DeSoto's men] to come through these lands had been guilty of hostile acts and had disregarded the rights of the natives."[4]

DeSoto had emptied the Creek's supplies, destroyed villages, removed some of the population, and brought new diseases, the greatest killer of Indians. In the Southeast, an estimated 200,000 inhabitants lived in the area in 1500; following the disease epidemics brought in by the Spaniards (smallpox, measles, and influenza), that population fell to 10,000 in a short period of time. Even after the initial epidemics, disease continued to attack the Indians throughout the colonial period as contact with the Europeans increased.[5] As a result of the tremendous death and misfortune, the Creeks general opinion of the Spanish was very low. Had it not been for the expedition of Tristan DeLuna in 1559, the Creeks may have never dealt with the Spanish. DeLuna's party came to Coosa in search of food supplies just as DeSoto had nineteen years before, but, in contrast, DeLuna befriended the Creeks and helped them in battle against their hostile neighbors while he stayed there. DeLuna paved the way for relations in the future by his timely visit and friendship with the Creeks.[6]

These initial Spanish visits did not lead to any significant trade relationships with the Creeks. The garrison at St. Augustine, established in 1565, was not capable of carrying on an extensive trade because of a lack of funds or goods.[7] These relations, furthermore, were not necessary because for more than a century no other European

power had settlements of note closer than Jamestown in Virginia. By the late 1600s, however, that changed; the English established Charles Town in present-day South Carolina, infringing on Spanish claims in the Southeast. In order to meet the challenge, Indians allies became crucial for both Spain and England, who sought out local tribes to create border protection zones around their settlements. The English allied themselves with the Indians by giving them firearms, rum, and other European goods to keep them faithful in case of attack. The Spanish used a less expensive policy targeted to convert the Indians to Catholicism in order to align them with the Spanish cause. All Indians in modern South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida fell under at least one of these influences during the seventeenth century.

The English in Charles Town had a twofold purpose. They wanted to exert as much influence over the Southeast as possible to take control from the Spanish and to establish a trading colony to rival the New England colonies of New York, Massachusetts, and Virginia. When Charles Town was first established, the English allied themselves with the Westo Indians, a tribe which inhabited the coastal and inland areas surrounding Charles Town. The Spanish responded by first aligning themselves with the Apalachees, who lived just South of Lower Creek country. The Spanish found, because of the Okefenokee Swamp, that any northward expansion would have to occur up the Chattahoochee River valley.[8] Only by befriending the Lower Creeks could the Spanish move on the English.

The Creeks found themselves in the crossroads of the Anglo-Spanish rivalry. During the 1600s, they had been victimized by the Westos from

the East and the Choctaws from the Northwest; and found themselves poorly supplied to challenge these threats by the Spanish missionaries from the South. The Creeks believed that the British traders could serve them better than the Spanish missionaries. The Lower Creeks sent a message to Charles Town asking the English for protection from the Westos, and the English considered an alliance in 1670. The Westos were the Indian tribe charged with the defense of Charles Town. In exchange, the English made the Westos beneficiaries of gifts of guns and ammunition, which they often used to exert their power on the Creeks in the 1670s. By 1680, the Westos had outlived their usefulness to the English, so they were deprived of all their former trading benefits, and annihilated by the English. Following the Westo War, the English concentrated their trading efforts to the interior, where the Creeks had a high trade priority.[9] During the 1670s, the Creeks also tried to set up an agreement with the Spaniards, but the Spanish were too ill-equipped to compete with the promise of the Charles Town traders.

The Creeks were faced with a decision in the late 1600s. The Spanish policy toward them had been fair and benevolent. The Spanish had not taken Indian slaves nor did they give the Creeks rum and guns to entice them to alliances or trade agreements. Instead, the Spanish felt religion and spirituality was the key to winning the Creeks. They considered all Indians as "Noble Savages" and sought to lead them along the path of Christianity.[10] The Creeks, as mentioned previously, were not a people prone to embrace religious doctrine and ritual. Having no rituals save the annual Green Corn Celebration, Catholicism had little

appeal to the Creeks. Material goods were more likely to impress the Creeks. The English had these material goods, and were not constrained by religion or morality to give the Creeks what they needed. English traders had ample supplies of guns and supplies which the Creeks could use against their neighbors, so the Creeks welcomed the English traders into their towns in the 1680s.

By 1681 the English traders had extended their routes to Coweta and the Lower Creeks. The market fast became the most important for the English, and mounting trade had a dramatic effect on the Indian population. The products which the English brought were foreign to the Creeks, but they were fascinated by English guns, ammunition, axes, hoes, pots, pipes, mirrors, rum, and clothing. In exchange, the Creeks supplied the English with Indian slaves and deerskins.[11] The deerskin trade became the dominant trade in the entire Southeast. This trade was started in Coweta by English trader Henry Woodward, who set up a trading post in 1685 and exchanged his English goods for the Creek deerskins. In only a few years, the English had firmly established themselves in the Creek country which the Spanish had failed to do so after over one hundred years.

The Lower Creeks were too valuable an ally for the Spanish to sit idly by and watch the English win their friendship. The Spanish about the English trading relationships with Coweta and Kasihta, the two dominant Lower Creek towns, and, they were painfully aware of the English-induced Lower Creek raids in Florida. In 1685, an expedition led by Antonio Matheos moved up the Chattahoochee River to drive out the English traders. In December, the 250 men under Matheos swept

through Lower Creek country and burned four major towns to the ground, including Coweta and Kasihta.

This was not what the Spanish intended when they dispatched the Matheos expedition to Lower Creek country. Although the Creeks swore allegiance to the Spaniards in 1686, it was only to prevent any more destruction. They continued to trade heavily with the English despite the fact that the Spanish kept a garrison at the Creek town of Apalachicola, down the Chattahoochee from Coweta. The Creeks, moreover, did not rebuild Coweta and Kasihta in their 1685 sites. Instead they chose to move their towns east to the Ocmulgee Fields, near present-day Macon, Georgia. The Lower Creeks were then closer to their almost exclusive allies, the English. Pedro DelGado was sent from St. Augustine in 1686 to attempt to establish good relations with the Lower Creeks, but he found that the Lower Creeks felt the Florida colony was poorly supplied and could not compete with the English. DelGado reported the Creeks considered "the presents of the English were better, that in trading they gave more powder, balls and muskets."[12] Furthermore, the events of the past few years had swayed almost all Creek towns except for the very Southernmost to the English.

The period between 1685-1715 were very important in the formation of Creek diplomacy. At this time, Brims was already active in Coweta politics, and saw the changes which his town and his people went through because of their total reliance on the English. These observations enabled him to formulate a policy to prevent a repeat of this dependency. The generation 1685 to 1715 was not a totally bad time for the Creeks: in this period they became the leading warrior

nation in the Southeast, but they did so at a loss to their self-sufficiency.

The problems which plagued the Creeks affected Indians everywhere. In short, the Indians became dependent on European goods and changed their entire lifestyle to accommodate their obtaining of those goods. In general, however, there is little evidence to support the idea that the Indians wanted emulate the whites and consequently bought their goods. Instead they saw European goods as conveniences and the Europeans as necessary evils in obtaining these items.[13] Since the English were well equipped to handle the Indian demands, they became the dominant traders in the Creek Confederacy and in most of the Southeast. Major towns had their own personal trader who actually lived in the town with the Indians and directed the thriving slave and deerskin market. The slave trade dominated early stages of English involvement, but disease decimated the Indian population. The Indian slave trade also had problems besides the availability of potential candidates; the Indians had a high escape potential (because of their knowledge of the terrain), conspiracies were frequent, and they proved very poor field workers. The English turned to the African slave market for most of their field hands in Carolina. The slave trade continued into the eighteenth century, but the English made deerskins the more accepted form of payment for English goods.

To obtain the English goods, the Creeks needed to adjust their lifestyle. Instead of working in the fields and building up food stores as they had previously done, the Creek men turned their attention to slave raiding and deer hunting. The shift from domestic

and town affairs to commercial interests placed strained the Creek way of life. One change suggested by Michael Green was that "Creek men became in effect, commercial hunters and slave raiders, and were less and less involved with agriculture and other domestic affairs. The women, to fill the void, took on a greater share of the farming responsibilities."[14] James Adair, who traded with the Creeks during the mid-1700s, observed: "The Indians, by reason of our supplying them so cheap with every sort of goods, have forgotten the chief part of their ancient mechanical skill, so as not to be well able now, at least for some years now, to live independent of us [English traders]."[15]

The extensive Indian trade in the Southeast strengthened Charles Town and the Carolina colony. At the center of this trade were Coweta and Kasihta in their new location in the Ocmulgee Fields. Other Lower Creek towns also moved westward to be closer to the English. The English continued to build trading posts and send more traders to deal with their most important customers, the Creeks, who were trying to make their fledgling colony stronger to eliminate the Spanish threat. Much to the Carolinians' dismay, however, a new threat had risen to the West. The French colony of Mobile had grown and to exert influence with the Choctaws, neighbors of the Creeks, and some of the most western Creek towns. The French were well known for their success with other Indian groups in the North, so the Mobile colony became a able threat to English domination of the Southeast.

In 1700, the Creeks found themselves in the midst of potentially dangerous situation. Their possible enemies included: the Cherokee to the north, the Chickasaw to the northwest, the Spanish trained and

sponsored Apalachee Indians to the South, the French aligned Choctaw to the west, and the advancing English colonists to the east.[16] Caught in the middle of a rapidly changing Southeast, the Creeks were unsure of their next move. They considered the English their close friends and the Spanish their enemies, yet their hatred for the Spanish was not enough to incite them to attack. They feared both Spanish weapons and the well-trained Apalachee Indians who guarded the path into Florida. The French presence also directly affected the Creeks, causing the English traders to step up their efforts to cater to the Creeks to keep them from emulating the Choctaws, who had become fast friends with the French.

In 1702, the outbreak of Queen Anne's War in Europe prompted the English to seek Creek assistance. Since most of the Creeks already hated the Spanish, the English request for help to attack Florida was accepted. The English sponsored Creek raids in 1702 on the Spanish mission of Sante Fe of Apalachee, which was a central outpost for the Apalachee Indians who lived in modern Northern Florida. In 1703, South Carolina governor James Moore assembled 50 Carolinians and 1000 Creeks at the Ocmulgee trading post. The expedition moved down the Chattahoochee valley and into Apalachee Indian territory, and burned Spanish and Indian settlements to the ground. A Boston news report in 1704 chronicled the results:

> "Apalatchia [Apalache settlement] is now reduced to so low and feeble a condition, that it can neither support St. Augustine with provisions, nor distrust, endamage or frighten our Indians living between the Apalatchia [the Apalachee Indians] and the French. In short, we have made Carolina as safe as the conquest of Apalatchia can make it."[17]

Moore's campaign destroyed the Spaniards' ability to continue to supply the Apalachees as well as make advances toward the Creeks. Spain did not play a large part in Creek activities again until after 1715.

Following Moore's devastating raid, the English made treaty of alliance with the Creeks in 1705. A council at Coweta consisted of the head men of all the major towns of the Creeks, both Upper and Lower, proclaimed a "humble submission to the Crown of England." The agreement was signed by the head men, including Brims of Coweta.[18] The alliance allowed the English to ask more of their Creek friends, who by now had become a very powerful Indian nation under English sponsorship. With English guns and supplies, the Creeks became the English enforcers in the Southeast, attempting to eliminate Spanish and French challenges to English control. Between 1702 and 1709, the English wanted the Creeks to harass the French colonies to the West. The Creeks gladly participated in these English expeditions to the West, because the Choctaws were the only Indian nation which could challenge the Creeks in the early 1700s. In 1707 and 1709, the Creeks participated in parties against the French outposts at Mobile and the Spanish in Pensacola. In 1711, a large raid against Choctaw villages was carried out by several of the Upper Creek towns. English sponsorship of these efforts proved to be the deciding factor in the success of each expedition.[19]

From 1685 to 1705, the Creeks benefited tremendously from their English alliance. In a short time, they had become one of the strongest Indian groups in the Southeast. They had eliminated the Apalachee threat to the South through Moore's expedition. By 1705, the

Creek raids on the Choctaw had weakened their power; meanwhile, the Chickasaws and Cherokees were English allies, protecting the Creeks from their threat. Seemingly, the Creeks could be satisfied and content with their position, but that was not the case. The Creek way of life had transformed them into effective warriors traders. They were no longer agriculturists, primarily concerned with their own affairs, but rather warrior pawns of the Charles Town colony. The treaty at Coweta in 1705 had sealed the alliance with the Carolinians, and the English worked less and less to impress their Creek allies. In the next ten years, a change came over the Creek nation in the next ten years, a change initiated by Brims of Coweta.

The Yamasee War

By 1707, the English traders were complacent. No longer were they trying hard to keep the Creeks faithful to the English cause: they felt the treaty of 1705 bound the Creeks to friendship with them. The Creeks became increasingly annoyed with the English for repeated trade abuses: price cheating, quick credit enforcement, and a general bad attitude. By 1711, the Creeks began to look elsewhere for European goods. The English still provided most supplies, but the Creeks made peace with the French and Spanish in order to find a more reliable trading partner. The Creeks became so annoyed with the remaining English traders that they killed some, and the trade vacuum was filled with Spanish and French goods.[20]

Brims, who signed the treaty in 1705 which ultimately led to the

English problem, devised a plan to eliminate English power in the Southeast. As mico of Coweta, he had seen what almost total dependence on the English traders had done to the Creeks, also how the English were abusing their trading privileges. Brims sought to develop a plan in which all Indian tribes in the Southeast would eliminate English traders from their midst, and teach the English a lesson. Between 1713 and 1715, Brims worked to recruit the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, and the Yamasees to join the Creeks in rising against the English. Throughout the Southeast, the English had been guilty of the same abuses that had occurred with the Creeks, so Brims hoped his fellow Indians could be induced to join his cause. All but the Chickasaw agreed to attack. The others waited for a signal from Coweta to make their move.

That signal came in 1715 and the Yamasee War began. The war was so named because the Yamasees, who lived closer to Charles Town than the other groups, directly attacked the English colony. They almost succeeded in their first attempt, but were later devastated when the English regrouped. Driven back, they sought refuge with the Creeks and with the Spanish at St. Augustine. Even after their defeat, the Yamasees continued to harass the English by attacking trading outposts with the help of the Lower Creeks. On the frontier, the Creeks and Choctaws eliminated almost all English traders a and a party from Coweta went into Chickasaw country to kill the English among the lone dissenters from Brims' plan. The English were caught off guard, as this Boston news report from June 1715 recounted:

". . . all their Indians, made up of various Nations, consisting of between 1000 and 1200 men, (lately paid obedience to that Government

[the Charles Town government] had shaken off their fidelity, treacherously murdering many of His Majesty's subjects.[21] . . . We had about a hundred traders among the Indians, whereof we apprehend they have murdered and destroyed about ninety men, and about forty more men we have lost in several skirmishes.[22]"

Ultimately, the war was destined to fail in eliminating English power from the Southeast primarily because the Cherokees did not attack the English as promised. Instead they remained loyal allies of the English and doomed the Creek plan. In 1716, the Creeks and the Cherokee had planned to rendezvous to attack to the Carolinian forces, but the Cherokee turned against the Creeks at the last moment. Future Creek/Cherokee hostilities center around the Cherokee's failure to carry out their part in Brims' plan. Although the English were not eliminated, they were disabled. The Yamasee War equalized the balance of power among the Europeans in the Southeast and set up the conditions for Brims' new dynamic plan of diplomacy.

Formulation of Creek Diplomacy

Following the war, the Creeks found themselves free of the English traders who had made them pawns of Great Britain. The Yamasee War brought the Creek Confederacy into a new era of European relations. The Creeks needed to seek friends among the Spanish and the French in order to fill the trading void left by the English. The Lower Creeks turned to the Spanish ; the Upper Creeks looked to the French. The Creeks allowed the French to build Fort Toulouse in 1717 at the confluence of the Coosa and Talapoosa Rivers, near present-day

Montgomery, Alabama, which remained in French hands until 1763, and kept steady French influence throughout the mid-1700s, especially over the westernmost Upper Creeks. The towns of Coweta and Kasihta moved from their new locations at the Ocmulgee Fields and returned to their pre-1685 locations on the Chattahoochee River, putting them in closer contact with the rest of the Confederacy.

For the Europeans, the Yamasee War changed the entire Southeastern frontier. Although the English were still the dominant trading group, trade had dropped severely after losing the Creeks and Choctaws as major customers in 1716. The Cherokee were the only major Indian nation to entertain English traders, so the English worked to cement that relationship exclusively for a few years following the war. Additional problems also came for the English because several Indian groups, most notably the Yamasees, were now living near St. Augustine and had become close allies with the Spanish. Often with Creek help and Spanish sponsorship, the Yamasees ambushed traders and trading posts trying to reestablish the English trading superiority. Benefitted tremendously by the Yamasee War, the Spanish went from weak enemies to serious possible allies with the Creeks, a transformation hastened by the Yamasees' relocation to St. Augustine and the move of the Lower Creeks back to the Chattahoochee River. The Spanish could not supply the Creeks with the goods they wanted because they were so poorly supplied themselves; yet the Yamasee War made St. Augustine potential friend to the Creeks until 1763.

The French clearly benefitted the most from the Yamasee War. Fort Toulouse in Upper Creek country was perhaps the most strategic position

in the entire Southeast. Its central location gave the French the opportunity to invite the Creeks to see their items for trade and entertain them for new alliances. The fort allowed the French to reestablish their control of the Choctaws and exert some influence in the Creek Confederacy. Brims' plan against the English had equalized the European power struggle in the Southeast, allowing him to set Creek diplomacy in action.

By 1717, Brims set Creek policy for the next forty-five years. After periods of Spanish overlordship in the seventeenth century followed by thirty years of overcommitment to the English, Brims devised a policy of Creek neutrality with the European powers. This neutrality, however, did not isolate the Creek Confederacy from the Europeans. The Creeks opened themselves to European infiltration more than ever before, but they made no fast promises to the Europeans. Brims stood at the center of this mass European infiltration. Instead of declaring his neutral intentions, Brims kept his policies to himself, and allowing Britain, France, and Spain to attempt to win him over as an ally to their cause. Brims wanted the Creeks to become "power brokers," actively seeking the benefits each European group could give them and maintain a balance of power among the competitiors.

Brims was the leading man in the Creek Confederacy at this time. He wielded influence strong enough even to sway the decisions of the Upper Creek micos, as well as the Lower Creeks micos around him. The Europeans targeted him as the key to any success with the Creeks, and Brims welcomed this as an opportunity to better Coweta. Brims accepted "the presents of the French, the entertainment of the Spanish, and the

favors of the English."[23] He did not wish to participate in any of the white man's wars, nor did he want to favor one European group over another. This was a difficult scheme to uphold. Although Brims could insure this would happen in Coweta, but he faced difficulty upholding his policy throughout the Confederacy.

By nature, the Creek Confederacy had very little Confederacy policy. Michael Green describes Brims' dilemma in 1717:

> "With no political machinery capable of imposing the will of one faction upon the adherents of the others, the Creek nation after the Yamasee War was caught in a state of apparent political paralysis, unable to move in any direction without the prospect of serious internal disharmony, Creek leaders made the most of this difficult situation by using it to their advantage."[24]

In other words, the best policy for him was no policy. Brims simply did not try to make every town totally neutral, for he knew if he let each town go its own way, no one European power could gain influence over the entire Confederacy. Parity among the English, French, and Spanish gained by the Yamasee War insured this strategy. Each European group developed a sphere of influence within the Creek Confederacy. The French were most powerful among the Indians surrounding Fort Toulouse (mainly Upper Creeks), the Spanish influenced the southernmost Lower Creek towns, and the English became popular again among the eastern Upper Creeks and the northern Lower Creeks. Coweta, however, remained a staunch defender of total neutrality.

Despite the factionalism which developed in the Creek Confederacy, very few towns overcommitted to one power. Jean Bernard Bossu observed the Alabamas, who lived in the land around Fort Toulouse, and wrote: "The Alabamas trade with the French, the English, and the Spanish, whom

they do not like very much."[25] Even though the Alabamas received a great deal of their supplies from the French, they still allowed trade with the other two which created a balance of power. Adherence to Brims' policy led to success for the Creeks. By balancing European power within the Confederacy, the Creeks could reap the benefits of European contact from all sides and not have to suffer the usual consequences of dependance and European overlordship. Michael Green sums up the effects of Brims' plan:

> "Three European colonies, each using the tools at its disposal to construct an alliance at the expense of others, surrounded the Creek Nation. Irrationally, these tiny colonial outposts expected to dominate the much larger, more powerful Creek Confederacy. In fact, for the next several decades, it was the Confederacy which controlled affairs in the Southeast--following its own course, exploiting the jealousies and ambitions of the Europeans, and reaping the rewards of the competition for Creek friendship."[26]

Aftermath of the Yamasee War

True to Brims' words, the Europeans scrambled for Creek friendship after the Yamasee War. A Spanish emissary, Diego Pena arrived from St. Augustine to lobby for the Spanish cause in 1717, and he was successful in some of the southernmost Lower Creek towns. He was, however, unable to sway Coweta, which held the greatest influence in the Confederacy at that time. A group of Upper and Lower Creek headmen traveled to the Spanish settlement of Pensacola in 1717 and actually agreed to a full Spanish alliance. They allowed a fort to be built at Coweta in exchange for Spanish protection from any retaliation by the English. But the English did not have retaliation on their mind. Instead they sought to return to their former dominance with the Creeks and sent two

influential traders from the pre-Yamasee War period to talk to Brims and the other Creek micos. The English also succeeded in bringing a large number Creek headmen to Charles Town and having them sign a binding treaty to the English, which made the English feel they had beaten the French and the Spanish in retaining Creek friendship. The English found later that the treaty did no such thing. They had succeeded in obtaining trading rights and guarantees from a few Creek towns; others had accepted the French while still others had accepted the Spanish. The English were shocked to find Fort Toulouse in "English" Upper Creek country and Spanish agents infiltrating both Upper and Lower Creek towns in 1717.[27]

Creek policy left leaders in Mobile, St. Augustine, and Charles Town confused. Whenever they thought they had a tight grip on the Creek Confederacy, they found they were wrong. European misunderstanding of the Creek way of life helped make Brims' active neutrality possible. Europeans did not comprehend of Creek headmen and the principle of their leadership as described in the previous chapter. When a Creek mico signed a treaty, he could not act as a representative of the Confederacy or even of his town, he was agreeing only that he would use his influence to sway the opinion of his townspeople. The mico did have great influence in his town, but if the war chief or the other members of the council disapproved of his ideas, he could do nothing about it. He was not an omnipotent monarch, but a trusted advisor and administrator for the town. Alignment with a European power was not a decision that the mico could make for his town. For this reason, from the European point of view, treaties with the Creeks

usually seemed to fail. Europeans saw the problem as Indian dishonesty, yet the only real problem was their own misunderstanding of the Creek way of life.

Coweta was the embodiment of Brims' neutral policy. He hoped his example for the rest of the Creek micos and councils that neutrality had its benefits, especially after the Yamasee War. Brims preferred to stay in Coweta, but he sent his sons to visit the European outposts to deal directly for favors. One son, Seepeycoffee, was responsible for dealing with the Spanish and the French; another, Ouletta (Hollata), was responsible for dealing with the English. Brims' policy of active neutrality featured ambassadors traveling to St. Augustine, Mobile, and Charles Town to promise some support and in return for trade favors from the Europeans. These visits were not always by invitation. Sometimes the Creeks arrived unexpectedly, for they knew the Europeans wanted their friendship and would accept them as honored guests. After 1716 Coweta perfected the art of neutrality and served as an example to the entire Confederacy. Historian David Corkran comments:

> "The Creeks were to seek benefits from and to give promises to the French, the Spanish, and the English, and as far as possible to avoid hostilities with any of them. They were to utilize each nations fears of the other two, to extract concessions, and to protect their own independent position."[28]

The activities of the Creeks left Europeans very confused after the Yamasee War. Unfortunately, the Europeans were the only ones recording this period of history, so the documents concerning the Creeks are confused as well. The French received the only concrete assurance of Creek support by actually being allowed to build Fort Toulouse in 1717. The Spanish had been promised a fort at Coweta by

Creek headmen at Pensacola and by Seepeycoffee in St. Augustine, but the Spanish Creek agent, Diego Pena, warned against the Coweta fort because he felt there was too much English influence still left in the Confederacy. He recommended that the Spanish concentrate more on the Apalachees and the southernmost Lower Creeks. In 1718, Pena returned to Coweta, this time to ask for supplies for Florida's failing Apalache settlement near present day Tallahassee.[29] This request hurt the Spanish chance of becoming more influential in the Confederacy, for it highlighted the weakness of the Florida colony. St. Augustine could not supply the Creeks with favors or protection.

The English worked hard to reestablish themselves in Creek country. Even though the treaty obtained immediately after the Yamasee War was unsuccessful in their eyes, it at least gave them some hope of developing new friendly ties with the Creeks. John Musgrove and Theophilus Hastings, the two traders responsible for bringing the Creek headmen to Charles Town, were men who had dealt with the Creeks before the war and knew how to deal with the Creeks. Their first stop was at Coweta, where the influence really lay in the Confederacy. They attempted to talk Brims into reestablishing old preferential English ties, but Brims would only submit to a peace with the English traders and allow them to return to trade. The Coweta council also warned Hastings and Musgrove that their relationship with the Cherokee jeopardized friendship with the Creeks. The council also admonished the English not to aid the Cherokee in any struggle against the Creeks.[30] The Creeks were now in a position to lay down their demands.

The Early Years

The Creek Confederacy moved into the 1720s with a newfound bargaining power. The English worked the hardest to crack Brims' neutrality scheme in attempts to regain their dominion over the Southeast, but the Yamasee Indians, who terrorized Charles Town in 1715, were a constant thorn in the side of the English. The survivors of the Yamasee War had moved down to St. Augustine for protection and in exchange for that protection served the Spanish. Most of the Yamasee activity centered on making life miserable for English traders trying to reestablish themselves after the war, but there was no way that the English could effectively deal with these small marauding bands of Yamasees. In 1722, Ouletta, Brims' English-oriented son, went to Charles Town where he agreed to try to convince Brims to return to English allegiance. Again, the English were disappointed to find that Ouletta could not overcome his father's neutral stance. Though unsuccessful in Coweta, the English found a great deal of support in the Upper Creek towns. Despite the presence of the French fort, the Upper Creeks traded consistently with the English. In the Upper Creek towns, Brims' influence had less effect, so the Upper Creeks were usually more willing to deal with the British than the Lower Creeks. The English were also able to recruit Upper Creek parties to protect their traders from the Yamasees in 1723, but found that Upper Creek loyalty was just as unstable as that of the Lower Towns. In November of 1724, a party of Creeks raided trader John Sharp's warehouse in Upper Creek country, an attack likely sponsored by the French, who

disapproved of the renewed English activity so near Fort Toulouse.[31]

In 1725, English Indian agent Tobias Fitch made a tour of Creek country, a visit prompted by the Upper Creek attack on the trading post, but Fitch had other goals in mind. Foremost, he wished to eliminate the growing Spanish and French influence. Throughout the 1720s, the English felt they were gaining an edge in the race for Creek friendship, but the Spanish and French influences persisted. Fitch knew it would be impossible to transform this situation in one visit, so he made his major aims to detach the Creeks from Yamasee support, end the Creek/Cherokee feud, and obtain reparations for the attack on the English trading warehouse. While in Coweta, Fitch also searched for a successor to the aging Brims. Brims was in his last years as mico of Coweta, so the English hoped they could influence the choice of a pro-English successor. Fitch did not choose well, because he chose Seepeycoffee, son of Brims who had supported the French and Spanish as the "rightful" successor. Fitch was, however, successful in turning some of the Cowetas against the Yamasee. In fact, Seepeycoffee himself led an unsuccessful venture to attack on Yamasee villages near St. Augustine. Fitch did not achieve his other aims. The Creek neutrality and hatred of the Cherokee were two Creek policies which were not broken easily.

The Fitch visit did little for the English position in the Southeast, but it the Creek's new diplomatic stance in both word and action. Several micos, including Brims, spoke for the Creeks. One Creek leader, called Hobyhawchey, responded to Fitch's request for peace with the Cherokee:

"But as for peace with the Chericeys [Cherokee] at this time we have no thought, they having lately killed several of the leading men of our Nation; and till we have had satisfaction we will heare of no peace; but as soon as our corn is hard we designe to be with them and after our return if your King will undertake to make a peace for us we will readylie except of it."[32]

The most significant statements, however, come from Brims himself, whom Fitch courted most of the time with during his stay with the Creeks. When Brims was asked why he allowed the Upper towns to battle the Cherokees, he responded:

"The Tallapoop's and the Abecas [two major Upper towns] may do as they please but we have nothing of makeing a peace with the Cherokeys. For them men that was killed by the Cherokeys of mine when the white people were there is not over with me as yet, nor never shall be while there is a Cowwataid [Coweta] liveing."[33]

Here, Brims illustrated two very important aspects of Creek life shaping Confederacy policy: lack of authoritative control and vengeance. Brims did not have the power to tell any one in the Confederacy to do as he wished, nor had he the desire to make peace with the Cherokees who had wronged the Creeks in the past. During one council, Brims directed an oratory directly at Fitch, to demonstrate how powerful and confident he felt of his position.

"I have sent my people against the Yamasees and my order to them is to take, kill and destroy all the Yamasees they meet with and in case the Sparnyards s'ould assist the Yamasees then the to the Spanyards as the Yamasees; but wethat they will have any success I cannot tell for ther is a Massage sent down to the Yamasees from the Lower towns to give them an account of my peoples going out. This should have been long agoe but you King never sent a talk to me before you brought it. There has been several talkes here, but I would not have you belive that I am to take a Talk from any man in this nation for though I an old yet I am the head of this nation and my mouth is good. I do not know the meaning that your King has left of his former customs for there was never a head man made here but such as I would recommend to your King. But now any young fellow that gees down and tells a fine story they get a commission and then they come here and they are head men and at the same time no more fit for it than doges.

Where is all these men that has been such good friends to you? How many of them is gone farr against your enemies?"[34]

By demanding to be kept informed of English actions, Brims showed his confidence in dealing with the Europeans. Such confidence was necessary to impress European officials and to increase Creek power and prestige in the Southeast.

In early 1726, the Creeks turned to their Spanish neighbors for trade goods. A Lower Creek delegation arrived at the Apalache outpost under the pretense of establishing strong relations with the Spanish, but really wanting only the presents resulting from such a declaration. Later that year, near disaster struck the Creek Confederacy prompted by their return to relations with the Spanish. In March, an army of 500 Chickasaw and Cherokee warriors marched into Lower Creek country and attacked Kasihta, Coweta's neighbor, but the Creeks repelled the attack before Kasihta was threatened. The invaders carried a British flag with them, which caused deep anti-British sentiments to develop among the Lower Creeks.[35] Although not deep enough to spur the Creeks on to war against the English because they knew war with the English at this time would lead to a quick end to the Confederacy.

The English Challenge

In 1727, Brims found himself in a difficult position. His policy of neutrality had kept the Creeks out of war for over ten years after the Yamasee War, but now new problems arose. With their well stocked trading empire and charismatic traders, the English had won over most

of the Creek towns. Only Coweta and other Lower Creek towns retained allegiance to the Spanish, while only the towns very close to Fort Toulouse maintained serious contact with the French.

The difficulty arose in the nature of the trade system developed by the English. The English traders provided a wider variety of goods, the best prices, and the free use of credit. The traders would allow the Creeks to buy items throughout the year on credit which was paid during the deerskin season. Perhaps the most attractive facet of the English trade program was the payment plan developed by the English. Instead of paying a flat rate for each skin, the English would pay more for the larger skins. The Creeks exploited this system by taking all their large deerskins to the English and exchanging their smaller deerskins with the French, who paid a flat rate for all skins. Governor de Bienville of Mobile observed:

> "The Indians carry the large ones [deerskins] to the English and keep for our [French] traders the smallest ones which according to the English tariff can be accepted only at the rate of three for one large one. . . Sieur Benoit informs me that the Alabama Indians [French name for the Indians of the Confederacy] persist in asking for trade on the same terms that the English offer them, in consideration for which they promise to have no dealings with them and not to permit them to make any settlement on their territory. This officer adds that if we continue to refuse them this request, it is to be feared that these Indians may become alienated from our interests."[36]

English trade allowed the Creeks to maximize their deerskin purchasing power English a popular and provided a greater variety of goods to purchase.

The English, furthermore, had the Cherokee and the Chickasaw as loyal allies, and used a Creek/Cherokee war as a bargaining tool to sway Brims toward exclusive trade with the English. For over ten

years, Brims did not have to submit to British requests to break with the Spanish and the Yamasees because he knew that the British would not retaliate if he did not. By keeping his ties with the Spanish, Brims retained Spanish influence in the Confederacy which was the key to Brims' unique neutrality. He knew the Spanish colony in Florida was much too weak to supply the Creeks with anything they needed, and also that no Creek mico, save those from the southernmost towns, would support the Spanish. So he took the task of maintaining Spanish presence in the Confederacy on himself. Since he was the most visible member of the Confederacy, perhaps the English would notice and work harder to gain Creek friendship. This strategy worked until 1726, but the Cherokee/Chickasaw attack on Kasihta showed Brims that the English were no longer afraid of him. Brims' policies had not failed, but the rest of the Confederacy had failed him. His fellow Creeks had overcommitted to the British and placed themselves in a compromising position.

An English survey in 1727 found the Upper Creeks almost totally loyal to the English while the Lower Creeks were split between the English and the Spanish. Brims was the spokesman for the Spanish cause. The English invited Creek headmen to Charles Town to discuss a total break with the Spanish and the Yamasee later that same year.[37] The Creeks agreed but Brims, who remained in Coweta, dissented, hoping to give his neutrality policy one last chance. Spurred by their newfound popularity among the Creeks, the English felt bold enough to ask for permission to build a fort in Upper Creek country, but the Creeks were still reluctant to have a British military presence in

their midst. By 1728, the British had gained a victory by normalizing trade relations with the Lower Creeks, which had been limited since the Yamasee War.

The year 1728 also marked the end of Creek/Yamasee friendship. Yamasee warriors began attacking Creeks, causing tension between the two. Ouletta, Brims' son and English ambassador, was killed by a band of Yamasee. Both Upper and Lower Creeks participated in Carolinian raids on the Yamasee settlements near St. Augustine. Brims supported this action, for he was convinced the Spanish were too weak to be used as an effective bargaining chip in his diplomacy and he demanded revenge for the death of his son. He would have to turn to the French at Fort Toulouse or hope the Florida colony would act on against the English before employing active neutrality. Brims did not give up on his policy, but in 1728 was he decided to lean toward the British until he could reestablish some parity among the Europeans. Thus, from 1728 to 1733, a peace existed between the Creeks and the English.

During the peace, Brims died in Coweta. Chigelly, Brims' brother, took over leadership in Coweta as the interim mico until Brims' youngest son could become old enough to take control. Seepeycoffee, Brims' eldest son and most likely successor, had died in 1726.[38] Brims died not knowing if his policy of neutrality would survive him. The Creeks were predominantly aligned with the English at his death, giving little hope for his policy. His successors in Coweta, however, had learned the success of neutrality after the Yamasee War and worked to reestablish the balance of power in the Southeast.

The Georgian Opportunity

This five year peace paved the way for a new challenge for the Creeks. As a result of the weakened Spanish position in the Southeast, the English made plans to colonize south of Charles Town, and in 1732 James Oglethorpe came from England to establish the Georgia colony. Soon after Oglethorpe developed a friendship with Tomochichi, a Yamacraw Indian chief friendly to the Creeks. Tomochichi became Oglethorpe's mediator to the Creeks to gain permission to establish a colony on lands which were designated as Creek hunting grounds in past treaties. Mary Musgrove, a Creek Indian women who had married an English trader and who was niece to the late Brims, served as translator for Oglethorpe in his dealings with the Creeks. Later in 1732, Oglethorpe asked Tomochichi if he would go to Coweta to meet with Creek head men on the Georgia colony's behalf. The Coweta council were encouraged by Oglethorpe's proposals and felt they would be at an advantage to shift their English commercial activities from the Carolinians in Charles Town to the Georgians. Oglethorpe promised to punish Englishmen accused of wrongdoings with the Indians, freeze trade prices, and prevent colonization in the interior. Oglethorpe visited Coweta in 1733 formally to make peace with the Creeks and open trade. Oglethorpe also gained land rights on the coast below Carolina to build Savannah, his main trading town. The Creeks were clearly receptive to an alternative to the Charles Town traders.

The establishment of the Georgia colony set up a competition between the two English groups. The Creeks felt letting the Georgians

colonize the coast allowed them to build a trading center to rival those of Charles Town, adding one more faction vying for Creek friendship: the French from Mobile, the Spanish from St. Augustine, the Carolinians from Charles Town, and now the Georgians from Savannah. The Creeks needed this fourth player in the Southeast because the Spanish were weak in the 1730s and the French were content to pursue friendships only with those Creeks surrounding Fort Toulouse. In 1735, the Georgians set up new regulations to challenge the Carolinian monopoly on Creek trade. To the delight of the Creeks, the Georgians enforced regulations and licensing to insure the honesty of the Creek trade. The Georgians claimed that all English traders among the Creeks must register in Savannah since the Confederacy lay within the territory of the Georgia colony. When Carolinian traders ignored this rule, they found themselves challenged by the newly appointed Georgian Commissioner of Indian Affairs.[39] The Creeks felt the Georgians could regulate up the English trade and provide them with better service.

By the late 1730s, a combination of problems shook the Creek Confederacy. The first and foremost was the absence of Brims in Creek political life. Coweta was led by Chigelly, Brims' brother and war chief during the Yamasee War. He kept Brims' policies intact, but he was not the influential figurehead Brims was to uphold neutrality throughout the Confederacy. The Creeks had relied on Brims to deal with the Europeans and maintain the balance of power among them. The other problem was the growing disappointment over the Georgians. Their policies had not helped trade to the Creeks; they limited the flow of goods by eliminating Carolinian traders, who instead of obtaining

Georgian licenses, preferred to trade with the Cherokee. The Georgians also did their best to eliminate the French presence in Upper Creek country. They lobbied for the building of a fort to counter Fort Toulouse, but ultimately settled for a trading post. Despite Brims' absence, Chigelly and the rest of the Confederacy had remembered not give all their commitments to the English.

Oglethorpe sensed the growing dissatisfaction in the Creek Confederacy, and took action to keep good ties with the Creeks.

> "I have received frequent and confirmed advices that the Spaniards are striving to bribe the Indians and particularly the Creek nation to differ with us, and the disorder of the traders is such as gives but too much room to render the Indians discontented, great numbers of vagrants being gone up without licenses either from Carolina or us. Chigelly and Malachee, the son of the great Brim, who is called emperor of the Creeks by the Spaniards, insist upon my coming up to put all things in order and have acquainted me that all the chiefs of the Nation will come down to Coweta Town to meet me and hold the general assembly of the Indian Nations. . ."[40]

In 1739, Oglethorpe returned to Coweta to negotiate a new treaty with the Creeks. The major topic of discussion was the boundaries of the Georgia colony, for the Georgians had already overstepped the bounds set in 1732. The Creeks gave the Georgians the rights to the entire range of coastal lands from Savannah to the St. John's River in Florida, excluding the coastal islands of Ossabaw, Sapelo, and St. Catherines, and a small strip of territory near Savannah.[41] In return, Oglethorpe promised to eliminate English trespassing on the Creek lands and trade reforms. The treaty was signed on August 21, 1739. The Creeks, however, were careful not to repeat the mistakes of the past. True to Brims' policy, the Creek head men made no promises to help the Georgians in their war with the Spanish or to give exclusive rights to

Georgian traders. The Creeks main goal was to insure their lands would remain in their possession.

Still Georgia continued its land grabbing even after the Coweta council. The Creeks had a name for the Georgians: ecunnaunuxulgee, meaning "people greedily grasping after the lands of the red people."[42] For this reason, the Creeks were never eager to help the Georgia colony in the War of Jenkin's Ear with Spain from 1739 to 1748.[43] Chigelly had gradually reinstituted active neutrality over the late 1730s, and by the 1740s, the Spanish and the French had regained major followings within the Confederacy. French and Spanish agents also did their utmost to prevent the Creeks from participating in the Georgian wars, and the Creeks usually complied. Chigelly did, however, send token forces to Georgia to maintain a friendship with the English. The Creeks were once again achieving a workable balance of power within the Confederacy, returning to Brims' policy after a few years of overcommitment to the English.

Indian wars plagued the Creeks in the mid-1700s. The Creeks constantly battled with their two major rivals--the Cherokee and the Choctaw--for Indian supremacy in the Southeast. The Choctaw were a larger tribe living to the west of the Creeks, who were well supported by the French and usually acted as agents of the French against the English and the Creeks. The French would use the Choctaw to convince the Creeks to decrease their English ties. The English would use their faithful allies, the Cherokee to the North, to bring the Creeks over to the British side. By not committing to either the French or the English, the Creeks prevented full-scale wars with the Choctaw or

Cherokee. The Creeks, as a result of the power gained from neutrality, could instead take the offensive against their Indian rivals; for they knew the Europeans would prevent the others from marching on the Creeks. The Europeans would not allow their Indians to hurt their position with the Creek Confederacy, the dominant Indian group in the Southeast.

The Realization of Diplomacy

The Europeans recognized the wisdom of Creek policy, and sought to examine its success and find weaknesses. To 1739, they had been unable to breach the Creeks' hold on the central Southeast nor had they effectively made the Creeks pawns in their colonial game. The Europeans needed the Creeks, for they lived in the most geographically strategic area in the Southeast; and, by 1739, had become the most powerful warrior nation in the region. Edmund Atkin, in his comprehensive Indian report of 1744, said:[44]

> "A doubt remains not, that the prosperity of our colonies on the continent will stand or fall with our interest and favour among them [the Indians]. While they are our friends, they are the cheapest and strongest barrier for the protection of our settlements; when enemies, they are capable of by ravaging in their method of war, in spite of all we can do, to render those possessions almost useless."[45]

Events in the Southeast bear out Atkin's observations. As friends, the Creeks could make any one of the European groups dominant in the Southeast. As enemies, the Creek nation could be a potent force to challenge any colonial enterprise. Yet the Creeks were neither fast friends nor bitter enemies of any European group. No one in Savannah,

Charles Town, Mobile, or St. Augustine feared a Creek attack, but neither did they feel confident of where they stood with the Creeks. Therefore, they all did as much as possible to sway Creek opinion to their side. Sometimes their methods were violent, but most of the time, the European powers felt gifts and favors would win the Creeks' friendship. These gifts and favors, often in the form of guns and supplies, led to the rise of Creek power, and demonstrated to the Creek leaders that Brims was correct in his assumptions. Active neutrality was a real benefit to the Creeks. By staying out of the white man's wars and refusing to throw wholehearted support toward one group, the Confederacy could stay intact. Since the Yamasee war, Brims and Coweta were largely responsible for this success. Creek diplomacy would continue into the 1740s and beyond, now under the new force in Creek politics. Malatchi, youngest son of Brims, took on the challenge of maintenance of the Confederacy through the policies of his father.

CHAPTER 3

CREEK DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

The formative years of Creek policy had passed; the task left to Brims' successors was to keep the Creek Confederacy out of close European alliances and the dominant tribe among the other Indian groups of the Southeast. Chigelly and Malatchi of Coweta took on the challenge of carrying the Creek Indians through the years 1739 to 1756, a very turbulent period in the Southeast. Both Europeans and other Indians attempted to entice the Creeks to take sides in the power struggle, but Coweta remained firmly neutral. As a result, the entire Creek Confederacy maintained a secure position and continued as a major force in the colonial Southeast.

Malatchi was the leading Creek personality in the in the mid-1700s. He, with his uncle Chigelly, received numerous emissaries and visited many European outposts in attempting to protect the Confederacy. In these meetings, Malatchi distinguished himself among his diplomatic peers with his abilities. William Stephens, the Georgia colony president who dealt with Malatchi frequently, described his Indian counterpart:[1]

". . . his person is very engaging: his stature but a little short of six foot, his make clean, and perfectly well shaped from Head

to Foot, as he appears naked to his skin; and when he puts on a Coat and Hat, his behaviour is such, that one would rather imagine from his Complaisance, he had been bred in some European court, than among barbarians: At the same time, though the Features of his Face were inviting, and shew Tokens of Good-Nature; yet there is something in his Aspect which demands Awe."[2]

Buoyed by his respect among the Europeans, Malatchi had the confidence and the abilities necessary to uphold his father's policies.

Between 1739 to 1756, the three European powers were active in the region. All three had master plans to stop the advancement of the others while improving their grip on the land and influence over the Indians. With the most ambitious plan, the French had designed a strategy to encircle the English colonies along the Eastern seaboard and ultimately force the English to leave. The French had created a huge belt of forts and outposts from Canada to Mobile to trade with Indians and encourage them to help them with their scheme; they could not challenge the English presence in North America without a great deal of Indian support. The English colonies were wary of the French encirclement and used its great trading empire to counter the French plan. By keeping the Indians supplied with quality goods and expanding their influence westward to the Mississippi River, the English hoped to stave off the French. As they had been ever since the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Spanish were unable either to act against the other European powers or to influence the Indians effectively. The Spanish were content to remain in Florida and prevent the Georgia colony from encroaching on Spanish territory. What all this meant for the Creeks was a tremendous amount of contact with Europeans throughout the period. Because of the Creeks' central location in the Southeast,

the ability to win their alliance represented almost certain dominance for the European group who won them over.

Each European power had strongpoints which to use to win the Creeks over. The English had the definite upper hand in trade. Not only did they have a bountiful supply of trading goods and presents for the Creeks, but their trading polices allowed for generous credit to the Indians until the deerskin season arrived in the winter. The French depended on their ability to make friends with the Indians without the benefit of material bribes. Throughout their stay in North America, the French displayed an uncanny ability to understand the Indian personality and use this understanding to win allies, despite their lack of trading or military power. The French, unlike the English, lived with the Indians instead of encroaching on their lands, which the Creeks appreciated.[3] However, French friendship and persuasive talk had difficulty competing with English guns and goods. The Spanish, meanwhile, were left out in the cold. Their mission system in the Southeast had been wiped out by the English early in the eighteenth century and their Florida colony had not resolved its financial woes from the early 1700s. The Spanish thus became a rarely used option by the Creeks during Malatchi's period, though their presence was maintained in the Confederacy as a token threat to the English. Not only were the Creeks able withstand the differing stratagems of the Europeans, but they manipulated each European power to their own advantage, thus strengthening their place in the Southeast.[4]

Because of the accelerated European activity the Confederacy,

rivalries developed for strategic locations within the Confederacy to insure continued friendship and control over the Creeks. Because of its prominent role since the Yamasee War, Coweta naturally took on the greatest share of attention. While the Europeans powers realized that Coweta would not be swayed, they felt that they had nothing to lose by trying to entice Chigelly and Malatchi away from their neutrality policy. English, French, and Spanish agents continually passed through Coweta, bringing presents and trading goods to secure their friendships with the great Coweta micos. The Spanish felt Coweta was their only chance to maintain some presence in the Confederacy, but they were hurt by their ability to send only two or three trading missions to compete with year round English trade. Although although active in Coweta, the French concentrated heavily on influencing the Upper towns. By creating a large French faction among the Upper Creeks, the French were able to protect their position at Fort. Toulouse and perhaps slow the English traders from moving on to westward tribes. The Europeans tested the unity and will of the Creek Confederacy.

The Turbulent 1740s

After August 21, 1739, it appeared that the Creeks had gone over to the English. General James Oglethorpe's treaty at Coweta with the entire Confederacy as witnesses was seen as a great victory for the Georgia colony and the English colonial effort as a whole. This was not the case, for as in the past, Creek friendship could not be won by the signing of a document which the Indians could neither read nor

understand. Although Oglethorpe thought he had found faithful allies to use in his planned assaults on the Spanish, he was wrong. Chigelly kept most of his warriors at home and encouraged the other micos to do the same. Creek wars against the Choctaws and Cherokees and lobbying by the French and Spanish had a lot to do with this decision, but there was also a great deal of Creek hesitancy to break with Brims' neutrality policy and enter the "white man's war." Despite the treaty of 1739, the Confederacy remained as independent as ever.

In the period following the treaty, Chigelly took significant steps to decrease the pro-English influence which was greater than at any time since before the Yamasee war, bringing the French in to counter the English. Despite being so close in Mobile and Fort Toulouse, the French had been content to direct their efforts toward the nearby Upper Creeks and had had little presence in Coweta. Chigelly invited the French to tour the Lower towns in the winter of 1739-1740, hoping that they would be able to neutralize the English pressure. While the French were visiting, Chigelly stalled on a promise to send warriors to Georgia to participate in Oglethorpe's planned siege of St. Augustine.[5] William Stephens observed in his journal:

> "It seems old Chigellie, their chief mico at present, had late shewn an unusual coldness towards meddling in the wars that we are engaged in against Spain; telling some of his people that they had no business to interpose among the white man's quarrels: which behaviour of his, it is suspected arose from some French and Spanish emissaries among them; but the main body of his people were eagerly bent upon joining the General [Oglethorpe]; and his nephew Malatchie, who was son of Old Bream, the former mico, stuck close to them, and put himself at their Head, resolving in the first place to go have a talk with the General at Frederica [Oglethorpe's fortified outpost on the Georgia coast] . . . after which, if he liked the General's talk, he would return and try who had the best interest in his country, he or Chigellie."[6]

Although Stephens correctly identified Chigelly's unwillingness to participate in the wars involving Europeans, he portrayed a power struggle between Malatchi and Chigelly which did not seem to exist. Future Creek exploits show Malatchi and Chigelly working in unison to uphold Coweta and Confederacy neutrality throughout their respective terms as mico.

In April 1740, the French invited all the Upper and Lower Creek headmen to Fort Toulouse to build on Chigelly's invitation of friendship. The French, however, did little to win over Creek respect and friendship. The French demanded the Upper Creeks rid their country of English traders and that the Lower Creeks make a total break with the English. The keen French understanding of the Indian ways had somehow failed them at this critical meeting. By virtue of Chigelly's initial friendship, the French expected the Creeks to become "French" Indians like the Choctaws but the Creeks would have no part of it. Chigelly left Fort Toulouse disappointed with the French attitude and even allowed more Creeks to go to Georgia to fight with Oglethorpe.[7]

Not only did the French try to break the strong English presence in the Confederacy, but they also used their Choctaw allies as well. As early as 1739, the French had threatened to arm the Choctaws against the Creeks if they did not end their commitment to English traders. Had it not been for the Chickasaws, the French might have actually used a Creek/Choctaw war to gain power. As the most westerly English aligned Indian group, the Chickasaw were a nagging problem for the French who used the Choctaw against the Chickasaw rather than pitting them against the more powerful Confederacy. The French desire to

exterminate the Chickasaws not only prevented Creek/Choctaw conflict but also fostered a peaceable French/Upper Creek relationship. The Upper Creeks controlled the trade routes from Carolina and Georgia into Chickasaw country, so it was advantageous to the French to develop pro-French factions within the Upper Creek towns. This policy continued throughout 1740s and ultimately led to greater French involvement in Creek affairs.

In Coweta, Chigelly still grappled with the debate over Creek involvement with Oglethorpe's offensive on St. Augustine. Although he promised Creek help in 1741 and 1742, he never delivered the troops. Creeks participated in some battles as English allies, but never in significant numbers. For their part, the Spanish who were never successful against Oglethorpe, made a play for Creek friendship in 1742. When a mico of a Lower Creek town was accused by the English of killing one of their traders, he sought refuge in St. Augustine. The Spanish seized this opportunity to regain some influence in the southernmost Lower towns and in Coweta. In November of 1742, Chigelly entertained Spanish emissaries and listened to their pleas for the Creeks to join the Spanish against Oglethorpe. Unfortunately for the Spanish, Creek deaths while fighting the Spaniards prevented development of a Creek/Spanish friendship.[8]

The period 1742-1744 marked a critical time for the Upper Creeks. Both the French and the English were active in the region, each desperately trying to gain the upper hand. The English tried to start a Creek/Choctaw conflict to relieve the pressure on their friends the Chickasaws. Meanwhile, the French sought to prevent a Creek/Choctaw

conflict and to remove the English trading presence from the areas near Fort Toulouse. By 1744, when French declared war on the English, both were actively lobbying for Creek action against the other. The Upper Creeks managed to resist the constant English and French requests to turn their attention to a more neutral activity, fighting the Cherokees.

In Georgia, a new era of Creek/Georgian relations began in 1743 with the departure of Oglethorpe for England. Oglethorpe had skillfully built a network of influential ties with the Creeks. One of these ties, Mary Musgrove, was a Creek Indian married to an English trader and was a niece to Brims. Oglethorpe employed her as a translator on his missions to Coweta and relied on her to use her family influence on Chigelly and Malatchi to maintain Georgian interests. As a result of her service to Georgia, she was received large land grants and became a force in Georgia affairs. After Oglethorpe returned to England, however, she fell under the influence of Thomas Bosomworth, an English minister whom she married in 1744. Bosomworth wanted to use Mary's extensive property holdings and her ties to the Creeks to become the largest landowner in the Georgia colony. The Bosomworth's activity in Georgia coupled with the French and English conflict in Upper Creek country spelled difficult times for the Creeks and their policy of neutrality in subsequent years.[9]

Challenges came from all sides in 1746. In February, Shawnee tribesmen from the north toured the Confederacy preaching a hard anti-European line, especially anti-English. The Shawnee argument was popular with the Creeks because of growing English trade complacency.

the English felt betrayed by the Creek's lack of involvement in the Spanish wars. This complacency, in turn, fomented antipathy toward the English among the Creeks. Hoping this change in attitude could be their chance to win over the Creeks, on August 14, 1746, the French invited the Upper Creek head men to Fort Toulouse to convince them to make a total break with the English. The Creeks, however, knew that the French could not supply them with the guns and material goods they wanted, and did they wish to become pawns of the French. Additional pressure came from the Chickasaw, who sent French scalps to the Upper Creeks to convince the Creeks to join them against the French and Choctaws. Again, there was a great debate among the Upper Creeks in which the neutralists prevailed.

In Coweta, Chigelly and Malatchi had their hands full with the English. In 1746, Chigelly met with South Carolina Governor James Glen while Malatchi went to Savannah to talk with the Bosomworth's about the Georgia land claims. The Bosomworth's determined that the coastal islands of Ossabaw, Sapelo, and St. Catherine's as well as the small strip of land near Savannah reserved for the Creeks should be theirs. Since Mary was a Creek, she should have rights to ownership of those lands. Mary informed Malatchi that the Georgians would not let her take control of the lands, contrary to Oglethorpe's treaty. When Chigelly and Malatchi returned from their respective trips, they compared notes and became concerned about the Georgia land claims and felt that Oglethorpe might have deceived them in the treaty of 1739.[10]

To remedy the problem, Governor Glen called a conference with the Creeks in October of 1746. Attending were Malatchi, the Gun Merchant

of the Okchais, and the Wolf of the Muccolossus; the latter two were the most powerful of the Upper Creek headmen. For his part Wolf consented to the building of an English fort in his territory, as a counter Fort Toulouse. Malatchi, however, used his influence as the representative of Coweta to refuse the English the right to build the fort. He used neutrality arguments to defend his case with Glen, but his growing wariness of the land-hungry English surely affected his decision. In a December meeting at Fort. Toulouse that same year, Malatchi warned all present that the English had designs on Creek country, with the Georgia land claims representing their desire for Creek lands. Malatchi used this argument to achieve a balance among the European powers which had been so lacking since 1739. For seven years, the Creeks had been just short of committed to English; now Chigelly and Malatchi found an opportunity and to reestablish active neutrality policy.[11]

In 1747, Coweta had reason to employ this policy. When the Creeks and Cherokees renewed their conflict, the Creeks could not turn to the English for help because the Cherokee were the largest English supported tribe in the Southeast. Instead the Creeks turned to the French and Spanish under the pretense of setting up lasting friendships to supply their war efforts. The Creeks went to St. Augustine where they were received by Governor Manuel de Montiano on August 3, 1747. Although Montiano had little to offer, he did not want to offend the Creeks even though he distrusted their offers of friendship.[12] The French, however, could be a little more generous and acted quickly on the opportunity to win Creek friends. An anonymous English trader

observed on April 11, 1747:

". . . the French had sent gunns and ammunition to every town in the Upper and Lower Creeks. That Malatchi received a gun that day with their talk acquainting them that their boat should soon be up and that they should have everything they had occasion for and that French linguists should be sent to the Coweta town."[13]

By now, Malatchi had becoming the leading man in Coweta, and during the Green Corn Celebration in August of 1747, he was installed as mico of Coweta.

Malatchi in Control: the Bosomworth Affair

When Malatchi became mico of Coweta, Mary Bosomworth realized the Lower Creek leader now had the power to help her and her husband in their quest to become the largest landowners in Georgia. Malatchi thus fell victim to the Bosomworth's schemes for several years because of his desire to help his kinswoman in an effort which he thought would help the Creeks in the long run. By making Mary the most powerful landowner in Georgia, he felt he could create a powerful ally in the English colony to keep the English expansion in check. Malatchi did not count on the staunch opposition which Georgia had to the Bosomworth claims or how his involvement in the fight would sacrifice his prestige in the English eyes. The entire affair would do little for Malatchi's ability to maintain Creek power in the Southeast.

In December of 1747, Malatchi went to Frederica to get the English to recognize Creek land rights. Recognition of the rights outlined in the treaties of 1717, 1733, 1735, and 1739, he believed, clearly validated the Bosomworth land claims. William Stephens, then president

of the Georgia colony, received a letter dated January 1, 1748 which read:

> "Perhaps you may not know that the Family of the Bosomworths have brought Malatchee here [Frederica] and made a formal speech for him denying that any lands in Georgia belong to the Trustees except the town of Savannah and the lands on that river as far as the tides flow but no farther and the Sea Islands reserving themselves Sapola, St. Catherines and Ossaba."[14]

His obvious collusion with the Bosomworths hurt Malatchi's authority on Indian land rights in Georgia, but his kinship ties with Mary kept him on the Bosomworth's side in the land struggle.

On other fronts, the Spanish still kept trying to maintain a good Creek friendship during the winter of 1747-1748, but they had little luck with the Creeks. Not only were they not powerful enough for the Creeks to use them as an effective tool in diplomacy, but also the Yamasee allies of the Spanish kept attacking Creek parties which swept through Florida to seek revenge on the Yamasee. When a few members of these war parties met their deaths at Spanish hands in 1748, Creek/Spanish relations cooled considerably. To the north, the Creeks sought an end to their war with the Cherokee and appealed to the English to help end the war. The English agreed, but the French did all that they could to keep the war going. They threatened the Creeks with trade embargoes and the possibility of a Choctaw uprising. The French knew that after the war ended, Creek demand for French goods would drop and the new Creek/French friendship might be in jeopardy. By the winter of 1748-1749, however, both the Creeks and the Cherokee had stopped their skirmishing and turned their attention to hunting for deerskins.

Later in 1749, the Bosomworth land struggle returned to the forefront of Malatchi's concerns. Word came from England that the English Crown would not recognize Malatchi as the sole representative of the Creeks in the land dispute, not only weakening the Bosomworth's land claims but also questioning Coweta's influence in Creek matters. In July of 1749 Malatchi travelled to Savannah to support his Georgia land claims and receive presents. When he arrived in Savannah, he stayed at the Bosomworth plantation for a few days before meeting with Georgia President Stephens in town. This hurt Malatchi's bargaining power because it further convinced the Georgians that he was only acting in the Bosomworth's interests and did not represent Creek attitudes. Stephens worked hard to detach Malatchi from the Bosomworths, but the Creek mico would not break away form his kinswoman, though he did express interest in dropping the fight for the Bosomworth land claims in exchange for recognition of Indian lands and promises of future presents. The meeting could have secured concessions for Malatchi and the Creeks, but Mary was jailed for disturbing the conference on August 17. She sensed Malatchi's change of heart and burst into the conference chambers loudly stating her case and proclaiming herself "Queen of the Creeks." Malatchi became so enraged over Mary's jailing that effective discussions were impossible.[15] The talks broke off in late August with Malatchi's position in the Southeast severely weakened and Creek relations with the English strained. He had made critical political errors in Savannah for which he would have to atone for in the years to come.

Following the Savannah meeting, Malatchi felt alienated from the

English and told his fellow Creeks that Georgia intended to attack the Confederacy. William Stephens reported in November 1749 that English traders in Creek country felt threatened.

> "He [a Georgia official among the Lower Creeks] related the great difficulty he had in persuading these Indians [the Lower Creeks] to come down which was occasioned by Melatchees telling them that the White People wanted to make war with them and that his talk had such influence, that the Traders feared some dangerous consequence might ensue. . ."[16]

He warned other headmen not to visit Savannah and began to look for more support from the French. Additional ill will toward the English came when an August Creek/Cherokee peace conference in Charles Town ended on a poor note. A few Creek delegates died from diseases contracted in the harsh coastal climate and some were ambushed by a Cherokee party immediately after the conference. By the fall of 1749, Creek/English relations were at their lowest point since the Yamasee war.[17]

Realizing the rising antipathy toward them in the Confederacy, the English began worrying about an Indian war. William Stephens and his aides wrote in September of 1749:

> "The inhabitants of the this colony capable of bearing arms are doubtless sufficient to maintain their ground against any body of Indians that would come against them were they more collected, but they are generally settled at a great distance from each other and as our frontiers are now left exposed many of them (in case of a war unless they forsake their plantations) must with their improvements produce and stock, fall a sacrifice."[18]

The Creeks, however, were not thinking of war, because Creek/Cherokee hostilities had broken out again in 1749 in a war centered around the alliance the Cherokee had with groups of northern Indians, particularly the Senecas. Also the Cherokee did not protect the Creeks from Seneca

ambushes as agreed earlier in Charles Town. Moreover, the Cherokee joined the Senecas in their activities against the Creeks. By the winter of 1749-1750, the Upper Creeks managed a tentative peace with the Cherokee, but Malatchi and the Lower Creeks refused to break off their attacks and continued the hostilities.

Dealings with the French

To help supply his war effort and cause concern in the English camp, Malatchi took action in the summer of 1750. Edmund Atkin wrote in his Indian Report:

> "Accordingly in 1750, Malatchi chief of the Lower Creeks being induced to invite some of the French from the said fort [Toulouse] to his town Coweta, two or three officers (one of whom was an engineer), and some private men did then go, were kindly received, and permitted to set up the French colours in that town; while the request of some of our traders to set up our colours was disregarded."[19]

The July meeting with the French satisfied Malatchi and the headmen assembled in Coweta. Evidenced by the fact that after the French left "Old Chekle [Chigelly] came into the square with French colours in his hand and desired one of the Indians to put them up."[20] Also in July, Governor Glen of South Carolina demanded that Malatchi follow the Upper Creeks example and make peace with the Cherokee, threatening an embargo if his demands were not met. Standing firm, however, Malatchi told Glen that the Cherokee must rid their towns of the Senecas and come to Coweta to talk peace before he would consider pulling back his warriors. The Senecas were a tribe from near the Great Lakes whom the English had contracted to incite the Cherokee against the Creeks.

Malatchi's tough stance proved successful; Glen's embargo was clearly an idle threat which also served to lower the English standing among the Cherokee.

Malatchi's invitation to the French in 1750 opened a new era of Creek diplomacy. After 1750, Creek active neutrality depended on only battles between the English and the French. The Spanish now were only minimal factors in the Southeastern power struggle. James Adair, English trader, observed this rising phenomenon:

> "They held it as an invariable maxim, that their security and welfare required a perpetual friendly intercourse with us and the French; as our political state of war with each other, would always secure their liberties: whereas, if they joined either party, and enabled to prevail over the other, their state, they said, would then become as unhappy as that of a poor fellow, who had only one perverse wife, and yet must bear with her froward temper; but a variety of choice would have kept off such an afflicting evil, either by enabling his giving her a silent caution against behaving ill, or by enabling him to go to another, who was in better temper."[21]

The French could be more effective than the Spanish ever were in Creek neutrality policy because they possessed resources to possibly compete with the English and caused great concern in Savannah and Charles Town. Governor Glen wrote in 1751:

> ". . . [the Indians are] all we have to apprehend from the French in this part of the World, [who] much more depend upon the Indians than upon any strength of their own; for that is so inconsiderable in itself, and so far distant from us, that without Indian assistance, [the French] cannot, do us much harm."[22]

The problem which concerned the English was the fact that the French had a good number of Indian allies and they were now making progress with the Creeks. Mobile and Fort Toulouse were close and convenient to the Creeks and were fast becoming active Creek trading centers. The English desired to stall the French efforts and reestablish some kind

of major presence in the Confederacy.

The check on French influence in Coweta came from an unlikely source. At the August Green Corn Celebration, Mary Bosomworth talked with Malatchi to convince him to renew good English relations and support her claims in Georgia once again. In Georgia, the Board of Trustees felt it held the upper hand in the Bosomworth land wars because they realized Malatchi had no real authority in the matter. William Stephens wrote in July of 1750:

> "Those formerly called Yamacraw Indians were a small party of the Creeks, that lived at this place [Savannah] under the direction of old Tomochachi [Oglethorpe's Indian ally in Georgia], who were a fluctuating People, often moving, and were called Yamacraws from the place where they then resided, which is still the Indian name for the bluff before this town--These lands are part of those, which Mr. Bosomworth claims, alledging, that they were given first to his wife [Mary] by Tomochachi, and since confirmed by Malatche, of which the Trustees have been particularly acquainted--The rest of the chiefs of this nation disown Tomochachi or Malatche's Power of giving these Lands away, and insist of their being the property of the whole. . ."[23]

Yet Malatchi had become somewhat of a neutralist renegade in the Confederacy; he was becoming increasingly unpopular not only with the English for his French and Bosomworth exploits, but also with some of the Upper Creek micos. Governor Glen outlined both threats to Malatchi's power in a letter to William Stephens:

> ". . . Malatchi declaring that as long as he lived he would neither permit us to take that fort [Fort. Toulouse] of to build one of our own there [in Upper Creek country], if he could prevent it, tho the Wolf and other [Upper Creek] headmen more considerable than him, not only gave us leave and their lands to build it upon, but also promised to defend our men with all their force, in case they should be attacked by the French, and Malatchi no sooner returned to his own country than he went to the French fort to discover every thing that had passed in Charles Town, and this has been a common practice whenever he has returned from Georgia or this country [South Carolina]."[24]

Glen furthermore cited Malatchi's behavior in Savannah in 1749 and his

invitation to the French in July as "most unaccountable conduct making it high time he should receive a check."[25]

That check came in May of 1751 when Patrick Graham arrived in the Upper Towns with the annual Georgia Indian present. In addition to the present, Graham convinced the Upper Creek headmen to agree and sign a new treaty which read:

> "We Micos, Chieftans, Captains, Warriors, the assembled Estates of the Upper Creek Nation, Sole owners and Proprietors of the Islands Ussabaw, St. Catherine, and Sapala, and of a certain tract of Main Land from a Place called Pipemaker's Creek to the Boundaries of the Town of Savannah commonly known by the name of the Indian land [these were the lands which the Bosomworth's claimed were rightfully theirs by past treaties], Do hereby declare that in consideration of a valuable parcel of Cloth, Guns, Ammunition, Hatchets, Beads, Paint, and other goods and Manufactures delivered [to] us by Patrick Graham. . . We the said assembled estates do hereby for our selves our subjects and vassals release, resign, and for ever give up unto the said Trustees all claim whatsoever to the aforesaid Islands and tracts of Main land hereby granted and sold."[26]

This agreement disavowed the Bosomworth land claims and protected the Trustees from any more challenges from the Bosomworths. In June Graham travelled to Coweta, hoping to secure the same agreement with Malatchi and the Lower Towns. Malatchi refused to sign the agreement, but he made no case for the Bosomworths as he had done in the past. Perhaps he realized the Bosomworth land claims were a dead issue and that more pressing matters deserved his attention to keep the Creek Confederacy afloat in the turbulent Southeast.

By the summer of 1751, Malatchi's policy focused on saving Creek lands from further European encroachment and continuing his attack on the Cherokee. Malatchi refused to sign Graham's treaty, which would have given the English legal rights to coastal Georgia. He also denied a Spanish request to place an outpost in the Lower Towns. Instead of

making his usual rounds of the European power centers, Malatchi engulfed himself in battle with his old nemesis to the north, the Cherokee. In the autumn of 1751,the Creek Confederacy was in the position that Brims' policy of neutrality dictated. The Creeks were friends to all the European powers, but allies to none, also Malatchi had maintained, the geostrategic position of the Confederacy which kept the Europeans interested in winning the Creeks as their allies. If the Creeks came over to either the French or English side, that group would be the dominant power in the Southeast.

The Acorn Whistler Incident

In 1752, the Confederacy was shaken by scandal which put them at odds with the English and threatened to create disharmony among the Creek factions. Malatchi had lost respect and been sidetracked throughout his early years as mico of Coweta, but this incident allowed him to reemerge as the dominant force in Creek diplomacy. In April of 1752, some Creeks ambushed a delegation of Cherokee going to Charles Town to talk peace with Governor Glen. In the past, Creeks had attacked Cherokees many times, but this ambush was so close to Charles Town that it concerned the English. Upset with the Creeks for disrupting his attempt to bring peace between the two most important Indian groups in the English Southeast. Glen made wrote to the Upper Creeks about the situation:

"But will you believe it, Friends and Brothers, or can you think it possible, what we are now to tell you? The very next Day after,

when the Cherokees left Charles Town, intending no injury to any one and expecting to receive none from any one, by the time they had gone a little way form town, being very a very inconsiderable number, a large body of Lower Creeks came up with them, and told that as now they were Friends and Brothers, and going the same path, the would be glad to travell and hunt with them, and as a token that they were quite reconciled together, the Creeks pulled the Feathers off their own heads, and put them on the heads of the Cherokees. After which going a little way, the Cherokees laid by their guns in the thickets around them, imagining no kind of guile or knavery and sat down to rest and refresh themselves, not expecting the least danger, which being perceived by the said Creeks, they came softly back and slyly placed themselves behind them to the number of 26 and fired on them and killed four of the Cherokees on the Spot and took another and bound him prisoner, whom they carried with them, an act not only prefidious to the Cherokees but outrageous and injurious to up, and which was perpetuated at our very doors and in sight of the seat of our Government."[27]

In the end, the Creeks responsible for this incident were not Lower Creeks, but Upper Creeks under the Acorn Whistler, an Upper Creek headman. Glen's demands of the Creeks for the incident were to return the Cherokee prisoner, to punish the murderers, and to officially apologize for the incident in Charles Town.[28]

Determined that the Creeks meet these demands, Glen sent two special envoys to Coweta to insure that his requests were carried out. Oddly enough, Glen commissioned the Bosomworths to carry out this important mission; despite their troublemaking ways, Mary was still a useful influence in Coweta. The Bosomworth's were received in Coweta on July 24, 1752 by Chigelly. Still out fighting the Cherokees, Malatchi did not return to meet the Bosomworths until August 3. The Creeks proved reluctant to talk about the Acorn Whistler incident, realizing Glen's desire to have them meet his demands and that the Bosomworth's mission was for this purpose. Thus, they further stalled talks by refusing to negotiate until after the annual Green Corn Celebration.

Finally, after a few days of successful stalling, Malatchi and Chigelly listened to the Bosomworths outline Glen's demands on August 6. The Creeks, however, had their doubts about these, Thomas Bosomworth's journal said:

"After I had finished upon this first article [the demand for punishment of the murderers] which was all I communicate to them this time they paused a considerable time, and an air of deep concern was very visible in their countenances. Chigelli first broke silence and said,'He was a very old man, but never in his life had he heard of such a demand for such a crime. Had they killed any white people they should readily have agreed to it, but to kill their own people for killing their enemies was what he could not understand."[29]

The Lower Creek headmen had a difficult decision. If they killed the Acorn Whistler they might cause a break with the Upper Creeks, but if they ignored Glen's demands they might find themselves without English goods and at the mercy of heavily English supplied Cherokee warriors.

On August 11, the Bosomworths asked for a decision from the assembled headmen.

"Mrs. Bosomworth then told the Head Men that they ought well to consider who was the most criminal for some of the most considerable must suffer death if they thought friendship of the English worth preserving. Upon which they all declared that they left it entirely to Malatchi, and whatever he thought proper to do in this or any other affair, they would stand by and confirm."[30]

Malatchi expressed some qualms about killing the killers of Cherokees, but he met privately with some his trusted head men to discuss the problem. Later that same day, Malatchi decided to honor Glen's demands and to eliminate the Acorn Whistler. When asked to explain his reasoning,

"Malatchi replied that he knew he [the Acorn Whistler] was a very hott-headed, passionate man and what they said was very true, and as there is real danger of his doing mischief if the Talk should reach his ears, which would unavoidably make war with the English. Therefore all

possible haste ought to be made to put him out of the way, which would make everything strait and be the saving of many innocent lives."[31]

By the next day, some Lower Creek headmen had formulated a plan to carry out the execution of the Acorn Whistler:

"This morning the Cussataw King came over to the Cowetas, and informed Malatchi and Chigelli that he and the Olasse King had Yesterday pitched upon a young fellow, nephew to the Acorn Whistler, whom he had used very ill some time before on account of some woman and had threatened to kill him to do the business, and by that reason that they pitched upon the young fellow was because they imagined that the little private resentment he might have against his uncle for the ill usage he had received from him might make him more readily execute their demands. He likewise told them that the messenger was yesterday privately sent away with express orders to this young fellow to kill him, and to give it out that his uncle was mad and wanted to kill him, and that he did it in his own defence."[32]

Malatchi risked a breakup of the Confederacy with this scheme, but he felt that it was in the best interest of the Creeks to eliminate the Acorn Whistler in order to keep English friendship.

On August 19, word reached Coweta "That the Business had been done."[33] With Acorn Whistler's death, Malatchi and the Bosomworths prepared for Upper Creek retaliation, but none was forthcoming. The members of the Acorn WHistler's clan had decided his death was necessary, in order to facilitate peace. Without the clan seeking revenge, the death was accepted and the Creeks returned to diplomatic efforts. Later in August, the Bosomworths had some rough going in the Upper Towns while trying to negotiate a Cherokee peace, but their troubles were more a product of their earlier land disputes rather than their role in the Acorn Whistler incident. Still the Bosomworths felt threatened; Thomas wrote:

"The discovery of the cause of the Acorn Whistler's death would certainly be a very ticklish point, and it would be necessary to have

some friends to stand by us in case of the worst . . ."[34]

On September 22, the Bosomworths made a breakthrough with the Upper Creeks. The groundwork for a Creek/Cherokee peace were described to the Upper Creeks, and:

"they declared to Mr. Bosomworth that the peace talk was very agreeable to them all, and they for their part readily consented to it, but as the Cawetas was the great town of both the Nations, and Malatchi the great King and Son of the Emperor of both Nations, they could not give the final answer to it till they heard his resolution upon the matter; but what ever Malatchi agreed to, the whole Upper Creek Nation would ratify and confirm."[35]

Not only had Malatchi engineered the successful peace effort with the English, but he had also maintained harmony within the Confederacy. The Acorn Whistler incident allowed Malatchi to atone for his past political mistakes and give him prestige so as to return himself to the most influential position in the Creek Confederacy.

In the spring of 1753, Malatchi chose to make peace with the Cherokees and consented to Creek participation in peace talks. Now that his authority and place in the Confederacy had been restored, Malatchi felt he was in the position to make some complaints and demands to the English. He told Thomas Bosomworth several Creek concerns he felt were not being addressed:

"[he] added that our white people in their Nation were guilty of a great many mad actions, as well as theirs, and that they had hithero forbore to complain of them, but as they had punished their people with death for satisfaction to the English, they hoped the Governor would punish the white people for the crimes they were guilty of . . . Secondly they complained of the white people stealing of the Indian's horses . . . Thirdly and lastly they complain of the white people for beating of them and using them very ill when they are in liquor . . . They likewise desire that all the strowling white people that are not employed in the Indian trade may be ordered out of their Nation, for they say that there are several that go out a hunting with the Indians and catching of beaver, carrying Indian wives out with them, decoying

them from their husbands, which are liable to be killed by their enemies, may die or parish in the woods, or several other accidents may happen to them, for which they innocently be blamed, all which complaints I promise to lay before the Governor and to inform them of his answer thereto."[36]

Malatchi additionally reprimanded the English for trying to slight his power by giving commissions to younger Creek head men, perhaps attempting to force him from his influential position. He protested that the English had caused their own problems and had wrongly blamed him:

"[Malatchi said] that they were very sensible [and] that their young people were very ungovernable and committed a great many mad actions which they ought not to do, for which the Head Men particularly himself, Malatchi was unjustly blamed as the white people themselves were the chief cause of their disobedience in making Captains and Great men by commissions granted them who had no right to command, which made great confusion in their Nation . . ."[37]

Coweta now regained the ability to make demands on the English and took solid control of their own destiny once again.

Malatchi's Later Years

In May of 1753, Malatchi led a Creek delegation to Charles Town as he had promised in the summer of 1752 to talk about a Creek/Cherokee peace. The Creeks, however, had more on their mind than peace with the Cherokees. The Upper Creek headmen, particularly the Gun Merchant, were concerned with English trade prices while Malatchi kept up his fight to prevent the westward expansion of Georgia. On May 30, Malatchi pronounced:

"I hear Doctor Graham pretends to say that when he was up in our nation, he obtained a grant for some lands in Georgia, but here are

some of my Head men to deny it, and say they made no such grant. I desire that they may be heard on that Head. It is always a maxim with me to speak my mind freely which I have always done, but if I am not listened to, I cannot help that."[38]

Governor Glen passed over this request, saying he had no control over Georgian affairs, but the Creeks had more to challenge the English. The Upper Creeks said the only way they would consent to peace with the Cherokees was if the English traders lowered their prices on the frontier. When Glen refused to make the necessary concessions, most of the Upper Creek delegation walked out and returned their English commissions. Malatchi had to smooth over relations and obtain the full complement of Indian presents which the Governor had previously promised, and Malatchi tried to make amends with Glen.

"I am very heartily sorry, that some of our people who call themselves Head Men and Warriours, should behave so like children, but they are unacquainted with the Nature of public business, and the true interest of their own Nation. They ought therefore to be considered as children, and no regard should be paid to anything they have said; they in a very rude and abrupt manner broke in on my Discourse without any power or commission from me or the Nation."[39]

Malatchi's apology salvaged the entire shipment of Creek presents which had been received from England. Moreover, all the presents were given to Malatchi so that he could "distribute them to those that you shall think most worthy of them."[40] Yet again, Malatchi had distinguished himself in the diplomatic battleground of the colonial Southeast.

Having worked out an agreement with Glen, Malatchi now turned his attention to pressing Indian matters. On the way back from Charles Town, he and his party were ambushed by a group of Cherokee, which threatened the new young peace. Malatchi did not renew the war; instead, he kept relations relatively neutral until the opportunity

opened to exchange deputies with Cherokee. In late 1753, the Creeks and the Cherokee began to send envoys between towns to improve relations and pave the way for peace. A Seneca deputy even came to Coweta and stayed for several months to reconcile the problems between the Northern Indian tribes and the Creeks. In April 1754, Cherokee envoys in Coweta satisfied Malatchi that a lasting peace would and could be upheld. This new Creek/Cherokee peace held firm for the remainder of the colonial period in the Southeast.[41]

Eager to seal their peace, the Cherokees invited the Creeks to join them against Choctaws, who had been causing the Creeks problems, forcing Malatchi to make a trip to Mobile in February of 1754 to demand reparations for a Choctaw attack on Creek hunters. The summer of 1754 saw very active lobbying on the war question. Since fighting the Choctaws meant jeopardizing their relationship with the French, the Cherokees claimed that French trade was weak and that the English were trying to develop an Indian coalition to remove the French. The French countered by saying Cherokee peace was merely a decoy so they could make an attack on the Creeks on behalf of the English at a later date, to take Creek lands coveted by the English. In July of 1754, at an Upper Creek conference at Fort Toulouse, the headmen received presents to convince them to go to Mobile. In Mobile, Governor Louis Kerelac of Louisiana showed them a forged letter detailing an English plot to join with the French to annihilate the Creeks. By the fall of 1754, opinion swayed between the French and the Cherokee lobbies. Some believed the French deception while others believed in the sincerity of the Cherokee peace. Malatchi received invitations to both Charles Town and Mobile

to clear up matters with the Europeans, but since he had fallen in ill health in the fall, he was unable to visit either city. Without Malatchi, the Charles Town meeting was cancelled and the Mobile meeting lacked the necessary Creek influence to create any lasting agreements.[42]

In the winter of 1754 the Upper Creeks renewed their demand for lower English prices on trade goods. Led by the Gun Merchant, the most influential Upper Creek headman, Creeks began to boycott the English traders in Creek country and take their business to the English traders in Cherokee country, who gave better prices. The French seized upon the Creek dissatisfaction to call a Confederacy-wide conference at Fort Toulouse on May 1, 1755. Malatchi, the Gun Merchant, and most other Creek headmen attended to listen to the French promises of better prices and a Creek/Choctaw peace if the Creeks came over to their camp. The Creeks accepted the peace proposal, but were divided on the trade offers. A great debate ensued throughout the Confederacy: some questioned the French ability to supply their needs while others looked for a way to escape the English prices.

Informed of the unrest in the Confederacy and French infiltration, Governor Glen offered to talk about lowering prices in September 1755. Not only had the French presence grown since the trade dispute, but the Spanish had also reappeared to approach Malatchi about gaining some land concessions in the south. Malatchi refused to sell the Spaniards land but made plans to go to St. Augustine to talk with the Florida governor. Only a hurried shipment of English presents prevented him from actually going. In 1755 Governor Glen suddenly needed to work out

an agreement with the Creeks as fast as he could. The French and Indian War had begun to the north and the English were taking some major defeats. Needing to end the trade controversy quickly, Glen wanted to build a fort in Upper Creek country to counter Fort Toulouse. Creek friendship, now more than ever, was the difference in who would gain the advantage in the Southeast.

Malatchi was unable to participate in the discussions because of illness. In July 1755 Malatchi put himself under the care of the physician at Fort Toulouse. Soon after A fall attack by the Choctaws created tension between the Creeks and French which the French were not able to diffuse in a meeting in Mobile. The Gun Merchant, the most influential Creek after Malatchi, took it upon himself to meet with the English and shore up relations. In December of 1755 and again in January of 1756, the Gun Merchant met with English officials. At the January meeting in Charles Town, he agreed to the establishment of a fort in Upper Creek country and an alliance with the Chickasaw in exchange for lower prices.[43] The Creeks got lower prices, but at an extremely high cost to their integrity. The Gun Merchant was not the seasoned diplomat on the level of the Coweta micos and severely jeopardized the Creek position in light of the French/English hostilities.

Malatchi could not help the Creeks in this situation, for it was reported on February 17, 1756:

". . . it was confidently reported there, that Malatchi departed this life, at a hunting camp, in the woods, about the beginning of last month [January]. This wants confirmation but as he has been sickly for a long time past, it is probable that it may be true."[44]

The Coweta micoship passed on to Ishenpoaphe, whose brother Stumpe was the guardian of Togulki, Malatchi's sixteen year old son. Ishenpoaphe would remain as mico until Togulki had been groomed as an experienced political man, able to take on the challenges which his father had met.[45]

Malatchi, and his uncle Chigelly before him, had brought the Creeks through the turbulent period of 1739-1756 without making any major alliances or becoming the pawns of any of the European powers. European officials in Mobile, Charles Town, St. Augustine, and Savannah coveted Creek friendship throughout Malatchi's micoship and did their best to entice him to make a firm alliance. A staunch defender of his father's policies of neutrality, Malatchi only did what he had to maintain friendship with the Europeans. These friendships manifested themselves in presents and supplies for the Creeks, which ultimately translated into power. With European goods, the Creeks could maintain their geostrategic position in the Southeast and protect themselves from Indian and European threats. Malatchi did make some blunders in his early years with his involvement in the Bosomworth land struggles, but he distinguished himself in the Acorn Whistler incident and his ability to maintain a constant tension between the French and the English in the Confederacy. Like his father Brims before him, Malatchi stands a vivid example of successful Creek diplomacy in action.

CONCLUSION

THE DEMISE AND SUCCESS OF CREEK DIPLOMACY

After Malatchi's death, Coweta lost its influence over Creek diplomacy. Ishenpoaphe and Togulki proved to be weak diplomats and uninspiring leaders among the rapidly growing number of influential Creek headmen. Most of the dominating personalities in the Confederacy were Upper Creek leaders: Gun Merchant of the Okchais, Wolf of the Muccolossus, and Wolf Warrior of the Okchais (the Mortar). These Upper Creeks took over the task of Creek diplomacy and led the dealings with the Europeans.

The period of 1756 to 1763 was a very turbulent time for the Creeks. They found themselves caught between the warring English and French, who were engaged in a bitter struggle to control North America. Gun Merchant's treaty in 1756, by allowing the English to build a fort in Upper Creek country, had potentially made the Creeks part of this European struggle. However, the Creeks avoided having their lands becoming a potential battleground by refusing to ratify the treaty. This was a blow to the Gun Merchant, but a significant measure for maintenance of Creek diplomacy.

French and English intrigue continued throughout the war, for now more than ever, Creek friendship was critical to success in the

Southeast. If the Creeks were to turn on one European group, that group would surely lose the Southeast. The nature of the Confederacy saved the Creeks more than any diplomatic efforts in the late 1750s. There was such factionalism within the Confederacy, the possibility for a unified stance on any alliance was impossible. The result was similar to the active diplomacy practiced by the men of Coweta, but at the cost of often developing bitter rivalries and rifts within the Confederacy. Brims had predicted that the nature of the Confederacy, lacking central control, would make any European alliance difficult, but he had taught that the Creeks should try to be neutral, not divided against themselves.

1763 is a landmark date in Creek history. Creek diplomacy had been declining since 1756, but in 1763, its failure was complete. France lost the French and Indian War and was forced to leave its positions in the Southeast. Spain, as France's ally in the war, was also expelled from Florida. St. Augustine, Mobile, and Fort Toulouse were evacuated, leaving the entire Southeast to the English. The Creeks found they were unable to employ their diplomatic maxims which they had used over the past fifty years. Previously successful, Creek diplomacy did not affect the English as it had prior to 1763.

The breakdown of Creek diplomacy illustrates the reasons for its earlier success. The Creeks were able to capitalize on several aspects of their situation in the colonial Southeast: (1) their geostrategic position, (2) the presence of three different European powers desiring Creek friendship, (3) dynamic and influential leadership within the Confederacy, (4) the nature of Creek politics, and (5) and the relative

power of the Confederacy among the Southeastern Indian groups. The Creeks recognized their situation, and used it to maintain their political autonomy.

The geography of the situation was crucial to the Creek's popularity. The Confederacy formed a buffer zone between St. Augustine, Mobile, and St. Augustine, the Southeastern colonial centers for Spain, France, and Great Britain respectively. To protect their colonial strongholds, all three coveted Creek friendship and worked to cement relations. Without their central position in the Southeast, the Creeks would merely be impediments to colonial expansion, never attaining the level of importance which each European group placed on them from 1715 to 1763.

Geography produced European interest in the Creeks, this interest manifested itself in active competition for Creek friendship. The French, Spanish, and English offered the Creeks hospitality and presents to gain their elusive friendship. These presents, often in the form of guns and supplies, increased Creek political and military power. The competition created tension among the Europeans; no one wanted to alienate the Creeks and lose a chance to make an alliance. As a result, the Creeks could make demands of their European neighbors, who would often fulfill them in an effort to maintain good Creek relations. Most other Indian groups were not afforded this autonomy.

Creek autonomy also depended on able leadership in the Confederacy. Brims, Chigelly, and Malatchi provided this leadership. The Coweta micos steered the Creek Confederacy through mid 1700s, ably taking advantage of the Southeastern situation. Brims first recognized

the potential of Creek diplomacy. Chigelly and Malatchi realized that potential. Under the Coweta micos, the highly decentralized Creek Confederacy could look to Coweta and its mico as an example to deal effectively with the Europeans.

The nature of the Creek Confederacy also facilitated these leader's diplomacy and insured its success. As long as there was a fair deal of parity among the European powers in the Southeast, it would be difficult for any one group to gain favor throughout the entire Confederacy. The Creeks had no centralized Confederacy or town policy nor could the micos dictate alliances. Each Creek was free to deal with any European trader or colonial official. Thus, a binding or permanent alliance embracing the entire Confederacy would be almost impossible.

Creek diplomacy was both the source and beneficiary of Creek power. The presents gained from diplomatic efforts made the Creeks more powerful, thus making the Creeks an even more valuable ally for the English, French, or Spanish. Guns, ammunition, tools, and other supplies bolstered Creek military might and made farming and hunting more efficient. By the 1750s, the Creeks, despite having a smaller population than other Indian groups, were more powerful than the neighboring Choctaw or Cherokee nations. Creek power was a combination of both political and military might which allowed the Creeks to exert influence among both European and Indian groups.

The end of the French and Indian War in 1763 changed the diplomatic balance, taking away the keys of Creek diplomacy. The Creeks were no longer the buffer zone of the Southeast, they now

represented an impediment to English colonial expansion westward to the Mississippi. There was no competition for Creek friendship, two of the three competitors having been expelled; therefore, the Creeks could not threaten to turn to the French or the Spanish to force favorable English responses. The Confederacy remained intact, but Creek attention turned from developing their diplomatic power to protecting Creek lands form English encroachment. Within one year, the Creek's confident, offensive diplomatic policies became timid and defensive.

The English quickly realized their control over the situation and proceeded to exercise more control over the Creeks. George Milligen Johnston, an Englishmen writing in 1763, recognized this in his description of the Creeks:

> "They are politic, warlike, and jealous of their independence; and play an artful game between the English, French and Spaniards; they are much courted by these European nation; they make the most of us, and are not indefensible of the importance of their friendship, particularly in time of war: They have lately insulted and killed several Carolina traders, for which no satisfaction has yet been given or demanded. The late Treaty of Peace with France and Spain, by the cession of all Florida and part of Louisiana to Britain, has given us a great advantage over this Indian tribe, who may very easily be attacked from Mobile, which is not 150 miles from the Heart of their country, and has water carriage all the way."[1]

Instead of courting Creek friendship, the English would much rather remove the bothersome and haughty Creeks from the Southeast altogether.

Despite its eventual failure, Creek diplomacy stands as a testament to Indian ingenuity. Brims and Malatchi were opportunists, recognizing their ability to exert their influence in the face of possible European domination. The Coweta micos worked to create favorable conditions in the Southeast and then showed the rest of the

Confederacy how to reap the benefits of these conditions. They were respected by their peers, both Indian and European, as highly skilled diplomats orchestrating effective Indian resistance to European colonial expansion.

ENDNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. William Bartram, Travels of William Bartram, edited by Mark Van Doran (New York: Dover Publications, 1928), p. 386.

CHAPTER 1 "MALATCHI'S WORLD"

1. James Adair was an English trader based in Charles Town during the mid 1700s. In 1735, he entered the Indian trade, primarily with the Cherokees to the north of Creek country. Later, he moved farther west to open trade with the Chickasaw who resided in modern western Tennessee. Adair was active in the 1740s in trying to bring the Choctaws over to the English side and hurt the French position in the Southeast. He wrote his History of the American Indians in the 1760s, drawing on his personal experiences in the Indian world over the past 20 years. A thorough biography of Adair and the conditions of his stay in the Southeast can be found in James Adair, History of the American

Indians, edited by Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City: The Watauga Press, 1930), pp. vii-xxi.

2. Adair, History, pp. 274-275.

3. William Bartram was a naturalist and adventurer from Philadelphia who toured the Southeast in the early 1770s. His observations on the Creeks are voluminous, but often saturated with the "Noble Savage" premise. Despite his sometimes all too praising accounts of the Creeks, his observations contain many key facts on Creek life and customs, for Bartram spent time actually talking with the Creeks and learning their customs firsthand. For a more detailed examination of Bartram's travels and his life, see Joseph Kastner, A Species of Eternity (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), pp. 78-112.

4. Bartram, Travels, p. 385.

5. Bartram, Travels, p. 385.

6. The expedition of Hernando DeSoto through the Southeast (1539-1542) is described nicely in John Bakeless, The Eyes of Discovery (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1950), pp. 46-69.

7. The Gentleman of Elvas is considered to be the best chronicle of the DeSoto expedition (1539-1542). His observations are based on his eyewitness accounts and are more objective than the other eyewitness journals. Furthermore, he made numerous observations on the condition of the lands and the peoples of the Southeast. J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Original Narratives of Early American History: Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528-1543 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), pp. 129-132.

8. Edward G. Bourne, Narratives of the Career of Hernando DeSoto

(New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1904), pp. 53-54.

9. Louis LeClerc Milfort was a Frenchman who arrived in Coweta around 1776 and became friends with the mico Alexander McGillivray. Through that friendship, Milfort rose to the level of war chief in Coweta and became a part of the Creek society. Indian historian John Swanton points out that Milfort's accounts, however, have been disputed, for they are "written in an intensely egotistical vein and contains numerous exaggerations and misstatements." But Swanton goes on to say that "it is evidently founded in fact." John Swanton, Social Organization and Social Usages of the Indians of the Creek Confederacy (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), p. 40.

A thorough biography of Milfort and his exploits is available in Louis LeClerc Milfort, Memoirs, Or a Quick Glance at my Various Travels and my Sojourn in the Creek Nation, translated and edited by Ben McCary (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1972), pp. 7-21.

10. Louis LeClerc Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance at my Different Travels and my Sojourn in the Creek Nation, edited by John McDermott (Chicago: Lakeside Press, 1956), p. 152.

11. Bernard Romans was a Dutchman employed by the English to produce maps of the Southeast. He arrived in the Americas in the 1760s and was responsible for mapping West Florida for the English in the early 1770s. On the whole, Romans was not impressed with Indian life, especially when compared to his contemporary, William Bartram. More information on Roman's career can be found in Rembert Patrick's introduction in Bernard Romans, A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida, facsimile reproduction of the 1775 edition (Gainesville:

University of Florida Press, 1962), pp. ix-xlvii.

12. Romans, Natural History, p. 92.

13. Bartram, Travels, p. 381.

14. Recent scholarship disputes the use of the term Creek and attempts to find a better term to describe the Indians occupying Alabama and Georgia. "Muscogulge" has become the term of choice, but it is a term which encompasses a large group of Indians. Proper town and individual identifications are often difficult and impossible to decipher from the existing records. To better understand the complexity of the naming, refer to J. Leitch Wright, Creeks and Seminoles (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), pp. 1-6.

15. Verner Crane, The Southern Frontier (Durham: Duke University Press, 1928), p. 36.

16. The Georgia Ranger's account stands out because it, unlike most other accounts of the mid 1700s, pays attention to the more common aspects of Creek life. J. Ralph Randolph, British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660-1763 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), pp. 122-125.

17. "A Ranger's Report of Travels with General Oglethorpe," Newton Mereness, ed., Travels in the American Colonies (Mew York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), p. 221.

18. Michael D. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press, 1982), p. 4.

19. Angie Debo, The Road to Disappearance (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), p. 9.

20. Romans, Natural History, pp. 90-91.

21. Jean-Bernard Bossu was a French Naval officer who visited Louisiana and Alabama in the 1750s. He concentrated his observations on the Creeks to the Alabama Indians which lived outside the French outpost of Fort Toulouse. He sought to treat the Indian as a "Noble Savage" and depict him as a simple man living life according to the "Universal Law of Nature." Bossu often showed European life as inferior to the freedom of the Indian lifestyle. A more detailed description of Bossu's travels and attitudes is in Jean-Bernard Bossu, Travels in the Interior of North America, 1751-1762, edited by Seymour Feiler (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962).

22. Bossu, Travels, pp. 130-131.

23. David H. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, 1540-1783 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), pp. 4-5.

24. "Hubert to the Council," October 26, 1717, in Dunbar Rowland and A.G. Saunders, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, Vol 2 (Jackson: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927), p. 249.

25. John Wesley was an English clergyman who spent several years in the Georgia colony. Throughout the 1730s, he made feeble attempts to work with the Indians through missionary work. Wesley left in 1737, with few good words for the Indians of the Southeast. Randolph, British Travelers, pp. 94-105.

26. Our First Visit in America: Early Reports from Colonial Georgia (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1974), p. 238.

27. Corkran, Creek Frontier, p. 16; and R.S. Cotterill, The Southern Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 12.

28. James Oglethorpe was the founder of the Georgia colony in 1732 and dealt heavily with the Creeks during the 1730s to maintain his fledgling colony. A full account of his activities in Georgia are in Phinizy Spalding, Oglethorpe in America (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977).

29. Thaddeus M. Harris, Biographical Memiors of James Oglethorpe (Boston: 1841), pp. 359-360.

30. Bartram, Travels, p. 389.

31. Thomas Nairne was one of the first successful English Indian traders. He was active in the early 1700s and made one extensive expedition into the interior of the Southeast in 1708. It is from this expedition where he learned about the Creeks and their customs. Nairne later met his death in the Yamasee War in 1715. More information on Nairne and his travels are in Thomas Nairne, Nairne's Muskhogean Journals: The 1708 Expedition to the Mississippi River edited by Alexander Moore (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1988), pp. 3-25.

32. Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, p. 32.

33. Bartram, Travels, p. 389.

34. Bartram, Travels, pp. 389-390.

35. Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, p. 34.

36. Green, Politics of Indian Removal, pp. 9-10.

37. Romans, Natural History, p. 98.

38. Bartram, Travels, p. 390.

39. Green, Politics of Indian Removal, p. 8.

40. Bartram, Travels, p. 388.

41. David Taitt was an Indian agent commissioned by John Stuart, superintendent of Indian affairs in the Southeast, to observe and report on Creek affairs in 1772. Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, pp. 493-496.

42. "Journal of David Taitt," Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, p. 503.

43. Bartram, Travels, p. 357.

44. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 141.

45. Thaddeus Harris, Biographical Memiors, p. 390.

46. Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, p. 60.

47. Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, p. 61.

48. Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, p. 61.

49. Bartram, Travels, p. 400.

50. Philip Georg Friedrich Von Reck was a German who came to Georgia in 1736. During his stay, he recorded facts of Indian life through both his journal and his drawings. He observed only the coastal Indian tribes in Georgia, but through these tribes he gained insight to the larger Creek nation to the west. Greater insight into Von Reck's travels is in Kristian Hvidt, ed., Von Reck's Voyage: Drawings and Journal of Philip Georg Friedrich Von Reck (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1980), pp. 7-25.

51. Hvidt, Von Reck's Voyage, p. 47.

52. Bossu, Travels, pp. 131-132.

53. Bossu, Travels, pp. 133-134.

54. Bartram, Travels, p. 398.

55. Romans, Natural History, p. 95.

56. Bartram, Travels, p. 390-391.

57. Thaddeus Harris, Biographical Memiors, p. 359.

58. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 152.

59. Bartram, Travels, p. 399.

60. Green, Politics of Indian Removal, p. 15.

61. Romans, Natural History, p. 93.

62. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, pp. 173-174.

63. Thomas Campbell is described by Corkran to be a British officer who visited the Upper Creek towns in 1764. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 6.

64. Found in Corkran, originally from Thomas Campbell, "Narrative of a Visit to the Creek Nation," Athell Papers. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 28.

65. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, pp. 153-154.

66. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 173.

67. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 172.

68. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 154.

69. Tobias Fitch was sent to Creek country in 1725 by the Carolinian government to counteract growing Spanish and French influence in the Confederacy. Among his stops was Coweta. Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, p. 175.

70. "Journal of Captain Tobias Fitch's Mission from Charles Town to the Creeks," Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, p. 176.

71. More information on the expedition of Tristan DeLuna can be found in Herbert Priestly, Tristan DeLuna: Conquistador of the Old South (Glendale, Ca.: The Arthur Clarke Company, 1936).

72. Originally in Davilla Padilla, Historia de la fundacion y discurso de la provincia de Santiago de Mexico de la Orden de Predicadores por los vidas de sus varones insignes y casos notables de Nueva Espana, found translated in John Swanton, Early History of the Creek Indians and Their Neighbors, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of Ethnology, Bulletin No. 73 (Washington: The Government Printing Office, 1922), p. 231.

73. Milfort, Memoirs, a Cursory Glance, p. 23.

74. John Wesley's observations are often called "the most unjust of any colonial traveler," but his comments here are useful in illustrating the European misperception of the Indian. Randolph, British Travelers, pp. 103-104.

75. Our First Visit to America, p. 238.

76. Benjamin Ingham was closely associated with John Wesley during the 1730s in the Georgia colony. He spent time at Creek trading posts in the interior in an attempt to learn the Creek language and remove the greatest barrier to effective missionary work among the Creeks. Randolph, British Travelers, pp. 96-97.

77. Our First Visit in America, p. 182.

78. Romans, Natural History, p. 97.

79. Hvidt, Von Reck's Voyage, p. 47.

80. Thaddeus Harris, Biographical Memiors, p. 359.

81. Hvidt, Von Reck's Voyage, pp. 47-48.

82. Adair, History, p. 275.

83. Bartram, Travels, pp. 382-383.

84. Adair, History, p. 276.

85. Adair, History, p. 277.

CHAPTER 2 "EVOLUTION OF CREEK DIPLOMACY"

1. Walter A. Harris, Here the Creeks Sat Down. (Macon: The J.W. Burke Company, 1958) p. 45.

2. Account is reproduced in John Swanton, Early History of the Creek Indians and their Neighbors, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of Ethnology, Bulletin 73 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), pp. 224-225.

3. David H. Corkran, The Creek Frontier (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), pp. 41-46 and Charles Hudson, "The Genesis of Georgia's Indians." Forty Years of Diversity: Essays on Colonial Georgia, edited by Harvey Jackson and Phinizy Spalding. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1984), p. 31.

4. Jean-Bernard Bossu, Travels in the Interior of North America 1751-1762 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), p. 138.

5. Michael D. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1982), p. 17.

6. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 46-47 and Swanton, Early History, pp. 230-231.

7. The plight of the Florida colony and its Indian policy in the eighteenth century are best summed up in Chapter VIII of John J. TePaske, The Governorship of Spanish Florida (Durham: Duke University

Press, 1964), pp. 193-225.

8. Walter Harris, Here the Creeks Sat Down, p. 29.

9. Verner Crane, The Southern Frontier (Durham: Duke University Press, 1928), pp. 20-21.

10. John J. Tepaske, "French, Spanish, and English Indian Policy on the Gulf Coast, 1513-1763: a Comparison," edited by E. Dibble and E. Newton, Spain and Her Rivals on the Gulf Coast, 1513-1763 (Pensacola: The State of Florida Preservation Board, 1971), p. 35.

11. R.S. Cotterill, The Southern Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 16.

12. Mark F. Boyd, ed., "The Expedition of Pedro Delgado from Apalache to the Upper Creek Country in 1686," Florida Historical Quarterly (July, 1937), pp. 2-32.

13. Nancy Oestereich Lurie, "Indian Cultural Adjustment to European Civilization," edited by James Morton Smith, Seventeenth Century America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), pp. 39-44.

14. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal, p. 19.

15. James Adair, History of the American Indians edited by Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City: The Watauga Press, 1930), p. 456.

16. Walter Harris, Here the Creeks Sat Down, p. 49.

17. B.R. Carroll, Historical Collections of South Carolina, Vol 2, (New York: Harper and Row, 1836), p. 576.

18. Walter Harris, Here the Creeks Sat Down, p. 51.

19. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 55-56.

20. Cotterill, The Southern Indians, p. 19.

21. Carroll, Historical Collections, Vol 2, p. 570.

22. Carroll, Historical Collections, Vol 2, p. 572.

23. Walter Harris, Here the Creeks Sat Down, p. 55.

24. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal, p. 22.

25. Bossu, Travels, p. 144.

26. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal, p. 21.

27. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 61-65.

28. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 61.

29. Tepaske, Governorship of Spanish Florida, p. 205.

30. Crane, The Southern Frontier, pp. 257-260.

31. Crane, The Southern Frontier, p. 266.

32. Newton D. Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), p. 181.

33. Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, p. 182.

34. Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, p. 194.

35. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 75.

36. "Bienville to Maurepas, April 23, 1735," in Dunbar Rowland and A.G. Saunders, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, Vol 1 (Jackson: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1932), p. 261.

37. Crane, The Southern Frontier, p. 271.

38. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 79.

39. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal, p. 23.

40. "James Oglethorpe to Harman Verelst, June 15, 1739," in Mills Lane, ed. General Oglethorpe's Letters: 1733-1743 (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1975), p. 406.

41. Trevor R. Reese, Colonial Georgia (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1963), p. 108.

42. Green, The Politics of Indian Removal, p. 26.

43. The best source which chronicles the ongoing Anglo-Spanish rivalry in the Southeast, especially the War of Jenkin's Ear and the associated activities of 1739-48 is J. Leitch Wright, Anglo-Spanish Rivalry in North America (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1971).

44. Edmund Atkin was a Charles Town Indian trader who spent twenty years among the various nations of Southeastern Indians in the mid-1700s. In 1756, he was appointed Imperial Indian Superintendent in the Southeast due to his experience in the among the Indians. A more complete biography of Atkin is in Edmund Atkin, Indians of the Southern Colonial Frontier, edited by Wilbur R. Jacobs (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1954), pp. xv-xxxviii.

45. Atkin, Indians, pp. 3-4.

CHAPTER 3 "CREEK DIPLOMACY IN ACTION"

1. William Stephens was Secretary of the Province of Georgia from 1737 to 1750 and President from 1741 to 1751. He dealt with the Creeks, Malatchi in particular, on many occasions in regards to land disputes and treaties. A more detailed account of his career can be found in E. Merton Coulter, The Journal of William Stephens 1741-1743 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958), pp. xi-xxxi.

2. "Stephens Journal, May 3, 1740," in Allan D., Candler, ed., Colonial Records of the State of Georgia, Vol 4 (Atlanta: State Printer, 1904-1916), p. 566.

3. Patricia D. Woods, French-Indian Relations on the Southern Frontier 1699-1762 (UMI Research Press, 1980), p. 171.

4. John P. Corry, Indian Affairs in Georgia: 1732-1756 (Philadelphia: George S. Ferguson Co., 1936), pp. 149-151.

5. David H. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p. 104.

6. "Stephen's Journal, May 2, 1740," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 4, p. 565.

7. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 104-105.

8. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 110-111.

9. The history of Mary Musgrove/Bosomworth's exploits in the Georgia colony is described in E. Merton Coulter, "Mary Musgrove, 'Queen of the Creeks': A Chapter of Early Georgia Troubles," The Georgia Historical Quarterly 11 (March, 1927), pp. 1-30.

10. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 119-120.

11. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 121-123.

12. Corry, Indian Affairs, p. 35.

13. "Extract of a Journal from a Person Lately Come from the Creek Nation, April 11, 1747," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 27, p. 11.

14. "Extract of a Letter Received by William Stephens from a Friend in Frederica, January 1, 1748," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 25, p. 243.

15. "Minutes of the Georgia Council, August 17, 1749," in Candler,

Colonial Records, Vol 6, p. 275.

16. "Letter from the President and Assistants to Harman Verelst,, November 16, 1749," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 25, pp. 460-461.

17. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 145.

18. "Letter from the Presidents and Assistants to Benjamin Martyn, September 8, 1749," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 25, p. 418.

19. Edmund Atkin, Indians of the Southern Colonial Frontier, edited by Wilbur R. Jacobs (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 1954), p. 6.

20. "George Galphin to Commissioner Pinckney, November 3, 1750," in William R. McDowell, Documents Relating to Indian Affairs 1750-1765, Vol 1 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), p. 67.

21. James Adair, History of the American Indians, edited by Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City: The Watauga Press, 1930), p. 277.

22. Chapman J. Milling, ed., Colonial South Carolina: Two Contemporary Descriptions (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951) p. 67.

23. "Letter from William Stephens and Assistants to Benjamin Martyn, July 19, 1750," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 26, pp. 18-19.

24. "Copy of a Letter from Governor Glen to the President and Assistants, October 1750," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 26, p. 64.

25. "Copy of a Letter from Governor Glen to the President and Assistants, October 1750," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 26, p. 65.

26. "Extract from the Proceedings of the President and Assistants in Georgia, June 21, 1751," in Candler, Colonial Records, Vol 26, pp.

389-390.

27. "Governor Glen to the Upper Creek Nation, April 28, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 211.

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29. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, August 6, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 274.

30. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, August 11, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 277.

31. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, August 11, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 279.

32. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, August 11, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 279.

33. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, August 18, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 282.

34. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, September 14, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 289.

35. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, September 22, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 294.

36. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, October 9, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 306.

37. "Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, October 9, 1752," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 305.

38. "Proceedings of the Council Concerning Indian Affairs, May 30, 1753," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, pp. 396-397.

39. "Proceedings of the Council Concerning Indian Affairs, June 2,

1753," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 408.

40. "Proceedings of the Council Concerning Indian Affairs, June 2, 1753," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 1, p. 408.

41. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 162-163.

42. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 163-166, and Corry, Indian Affairs, p. 137.

43. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, p. 172.

44. "Lachlan McGillivray to Governor Glen and the Council, February 17, 1756," in McDowell, Documents, Vol 2, p. 103.

45. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, pp. 172-173.

CONCLUSION "THE DEMISE AND SUCCESS OF CREEK DIPLOMACY"

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